

THE
OECONOMY
OF
Universal Providence

FOR THE
SALVATION of all MEN.

Where is also demonstrated
The Nullity of the Doctrine of
Modern Predestination:

AND
That the Reasons and Passages of Scripture
alleged to prove it, do by no means
do it.

With the Analysis and short Explication of
St. PAUL's Epistle to the ROMANS.

By *PETER POIRET*.

VOL. VI.

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OF THE

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COMMISSIONERS OF THE



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TO THE READER.



HIS Treatise of Providence, which is the last of the *Divine Oeconomy*, may pass for a compleat Piece by it self and independent on the rest, upon the Subject of the Universality of Grace, but for some References that are necessary when we have a mind to descend from the general to particular Instances. I have endeavour'd to dispose my Subject in as methodical and close a Manner as possible. Of the three Parts, of which this Treatise consists, the first and the principal is that of *Providence*, which I consider under three Periods, before the Fall, during the Fall, and after the Fall of Man (Chap. I, II, III.) and I have subdivided this last into three Parts, as I have consider'd the *Divine Providence* either in the *Idea* of God, in his Prescience and Prevision (Chap. IV.) or in the *Assu-ation*, or actual Care he takes of Mankind in their Root *Adam*, or in his Children; as well such of them as are resolutely wicked, as *Cain*; or such as are holy and regenerate, as *Abel*; or such as are between these two States, as the common Sort of *Seth's* Posterity; and lastly, such Bodies as are made up of People of all Sorts, or States and Empires (Chap. V, VI, VII, VIII, IX.) and for the third Branch of my Subdivision I have spent a Chapter (X.) to consider the same Providence, as it hath declar'd it self by *Words*, that is to say, by Prophecies and Predictions.

Men commonly confine their Considerations of Providence only to the time after the Fall of Man, and yet this Fall is but an Incident merely accidental and contingent to the Design and Conduct of the Divine Providence. This Restriction to a Matter and State so obscure as is that of Sin and Sinners, has render'd Men wholly incapable to frame just Conceptions of the Providence of God, which may be seen in its natural and bright Colours, when we

To the Reader.

look on it in the Purity of its own Element, which is the State before the Fall. Hence it is that we ought to fetch the Light that is necessary to pierce into that Darkness that Sin will afterwards raise to perplex both its Ways and the Knowledge of them. This we may assuredly look upon as a very material Observation, and so not slightly run over the first Chapter of this Treatise.

The XIth, XIIth, and XIIIth Chapters make the second Part of this Treatise, which, with the artificial Proofs of this System concerning the Universality of God's Providence and Grace, shews the insuperable Difficulties of the Systems of Particularism, as well Supralapsarian as Sublapsarian; and there I answer the Difficulties that may be objected to mine, the peculiar Characters of which is this, to assert God's *Grace*, and its impartial *Universality*, and Man's indetermin'd *Liberty*.

The rest of the Chapters make up the last Part of the Treatise, which I end in shewing how pernicious the System of the Pelagians, with all their Universality is (Chap. XVIII.)

The XIVth Chapter contains general Answers, as also some particular Ones to the inartificial Objections that are made from Scripture; and the Three following Chapters XV, XVI, XVII. are design'd not only to explain the IXth Chapter to the *Romans*, which is the great and main Objection, but I also give there the Plan and brief Explication of that whole Divine Epistle, wherein I prove the Truth of all my System of the *DIVINE OECONOMY*, and give the true Idea of *Christian Divinity*.

As I little esteem Critical Learning, and the Activity of human Reason in the Explication of Scripture; I have endeavour'd here to have recourse to the true Principle of interpreting Scripture, *viz.* the begging the Assistance of God's inward Grace: 'Tis of his Mercy I receiv'd whatever Good I there advance, and without it I had in vain consulted Criticism and human Reason: I should have err'd as well as others that have gone about to explain this Epistle with those poor Helps. There may doubtless some Faults be met with there, owing to my Weakness; but it may be too you may find Commentaries in *Quarto* and *Folio*, upon this Epistle, that will less contribute to the true Interpretation of it than that little you will there meet with in Two or Three Sheets.

To make an end of what I have to say upon a Work which this Treatise concludes, I declare, I take those only for competent Judges of it, that have read and understood as well the preceding Treatises as this; and I beg those
that

To the Reader.

that have not done it, to spend their Verdict upon other Matters: besides these two Conditions, I require also that they be Persons of the greatest Sincerity and Impartiality imaginable. I am very sensible this last is a very rare Qualification, and that an impartial Person, one that adheres to no side but that of the Truth, and that readily subscribes to it where-ever scatter'd, among the different Parties, he meets with it, is now a-days a kind of Prodigy. The first thing Men generally ask after in any Matter whatever, is, what Party is he of? To say, one is of the Party of Truth satisfies no body; and yet whatever else Men say or do, signifies just nothing. But it may be every Body is willing to be, and thinks he really is on the side of Truth. Pure Fancy! Men stand out and upon their Guard against all Truth that is not of their own Stamp and profess'd by their own Party: they are asham'd to learn a little too late, and heartily own they have been in an Error tho' to their own Consciences alone, much less to do so publickly and to recant their old Mistakes, especially when they have good Preferments and the Esteem and Kindness of those they dare not offend, annex to them. This makes many wavering and doubling with God stifle the Truth that is springing up in their Heart. Self-love, and Self-approbation, that makes Men fancy themselves Favourites of God, and mighty Proficients in his Secrets, in Knowledge, in Grace, and in a State of Salvation, does no less contribute to this Disposition. We are so hugely pleas'd to rock our selves asleep in these pleasant Dreams and charming Imaginations, that we fear, like Death, to be undeceiv'd and disturb'd by the troublesome Importunity of Truth, that will discover the true Misery and the damnable State we are in. Men are in this Case just like the old Fool we read of, that in his Frenzy fancy'd all the Ships that came to Port, his own, and therefore curs'd the Physicians that took away all his Joys and fancy'd Riches as well as his Disease. Our spiritual Franticks, that count all the Divine Treasures their own, and that say to themselves with so much Pleasure, The Truth is mine, I keep it, I see clearly into it, *I am Rich, and have Abundance, I want for Nothing*; no sooner hear the Truth saying to them, *thou art Blind, thou art Naked and Poor, thou art Wretched and Miserable, and knowest not thy self!* and convincing them of it, but like Madmen they fall upon this galling Light that undeceives them, and not being able to obscure the Lustre of its Rays, they endeavour to turn Men away from it by slandering those that hold it out; and the common Artifice of these Calumniators is to charge others with what they

them-

To the Reader.

themselves are guilty of, and to publish to the World that those they have a mind to render odious, rail against all Mankind. They will say the same of me, if they have not already, because declaring again and again against the Learned and Unlearned, the Secular and Ecclesiasticks, I do not in every Line tell them I mean only the Wicked and not the Good. And therefore it is that I declare here again the fifth or sixth and last Time (and I desire all good Men to remember it) that I think there are in all States of Men, Learned, Clergy, and others, still left many sincere, generous and honest Souls, whom I love and honour, and would gladly serve with the last drop of my Blood; and that I intend not to make so gross a Medley as to confound them with the Wicked, against whose Sins I freely declar'd my self; nor ever thought the Good would have look'd upon themselves as concern'd in such Reproofs: I think the whole Body and all the Parts of my Work sufficiently manifest that the Good alone are the only Persons I value upon Earth, and my chief Treasure, in whatever Party, Sect, or Place of the World they are to be found; much more when to their Probity they have added large Measures and the good Use of Learning, and are in Places and Charges that are of themselves Honourable: If you meet here some hard Words against some Things or Opinions that are common to some of both sorts, 'tis because they are likewise common to the Wicked and Opinionative, that would perniciously keep up the Abuse and Falshy of them against the Truth, and then 'tis but just to speak to such sometimes in such Fashion, as the Good, that implicitly love the Truth though unknown, and heartily embrace it when discover'd to them, should not take to themselves. But if this will not yet satisfy some good Men, who after all will think themselves offended by the Refutation of some of their Opinions, I conjure them by the good Will I had to serve them, or rather for the Love of God, to pardon this my Imperfection, and to pray God to forgive me too all my other Sins against his Love and the Love of my Neighbour. Nor will I for my part forget to recommend them to the Mercy of the Lord. *Amen.*

T H E
C O N T E N T S
O F T H E
Sixth and Last V O L U M E.

Chap.

I. **O**F the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man before the Fall. Five Things provided by it. A Fundamental Explication of what the Communication of God to Creatures is, what real Causes, what occasional Causes are; what God's Concourse, what the Generality, the Simplicity, Impartiality and Singularity of the Rules, of the Ways, Acts, and Election of God towards intelligent Creatures are. Pag. 1.

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VI. Of

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THE
OECONOMY
OF
Universal Providence
FOR THE
Salvation of all MEN.

CHAP. I.

Of the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man before the Fall. Five things provided by it. A fundamental Explication of what the Communication of God to Creatures is, what real Causes, what occasional Causes are; what God's Concourse, what the Generality, the Simplicity, Impartiality and Singularity of the Rules, of the Ways, Acts, and Election of God towards intelligent Creatures are.

I.



DESIGN, by God's Help, to treat of three things in this Book; the First, how God intending to save all Men, has on his Part so provided that all may be saved. The Second, how false, unjust and absurd that Doctrine is that teaches, that God has made particular Decrees to save only some Men, and that he wills the rest should perish. The Third, that the little Reason-

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I. The
Scope of
this Tre-
atise.

ings

Chap. I. *ings Men use, and the Passages of Scripture they al-*
 ledge to support this strange Doctrine, do nothing less
 than confirm it. I will begin with the first, and will al-
 ways endeavour to demonstrate things in their Sources,
 for when we once see them plainly there, all the
 Truths that depend on them become very easie and
 clear.

II. God
 having
 created all
 Men for
 Salvation,
 has consti-
 tuted such
 Rules, and
 provided
 such Means,
 as all may
 be sav'd
 by

II. God's Design in the Creation of intelligent Be-
 ings, was to express in them his own Image, to com-
 municate to them himself, his Justice, his Light, and
 his Joy; himself, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that
 is to say, he created them to save 'em, or to make 'em
 happy. This Design of God you may take for an un-
 doubted and certain Truth, and if you seek the Proof
 of it, you need but consult the last Chapter of the Oe-
 conomy of the Creation.

Now then it being the Part of Wisdom, much more
 of infinite Wisdom, to appoint such Rules and Means
 by which the End propos'd may be perfectly attain'd,
 God has doubtless pitch'd upon such Rules and Ways
 as will enable all intelligent Creatures, or all Men (who
 are more particularly our present Subject) to attain
 eternal Life, without excluding, or indeed without all
 Possibility any one of 'em should be excluded, from
 any Defect in the Means made use of by God.

III. Three
 Periods of
 Divine
 Provi-
 dence, or
 three sorts
 of Provi-
 dences.

III. The better to comprehend this important Truth
 we must consider it with respect to the three Estates
 of Man, viz. to that before his Sin, at the committing
 of Sin, and after Sin. We shall see, if it please God,
 how his divine Power, Wisdom and Goodness have by
 Rules and Means perfect and proportion'd to their
 needs universally provided that all might be saved. And
 so we come to consider in God three sorts of Provi-
 dence, each perfect and universal. The *First* before,
 the *Second* at, the *Third* after the Fall.

IV.
Shelves to
be avoided,
and the
way we are
to take.

IV. To comprehend the following Truths perfectly
 well, we must free our Minds of abundance of Chime-
 ra's some new Philosophers have been pleas'd to invent,
 to explain the Ways of God in such a manner as makes
 it necessary that many should be lost. They say, that
 God intending to accomplish his Design (of saving all
 Men) by the most simple Ways, the Simplicity of these
 Ways would not suffer all to be saved. That is, that
 the

the Goodness, Wisdom and Simplicity of God do contradict one another; that his Charity is either weak, or foolish and indiscreet. In a Word, that God's Attributes are at Variance among themselves. Men have talk'd, some of an universal and particular Concurrence, others of the Cause real, others of Causes occasional, of their Rules and Ways *simple, uniform, general, singular, particular*, with such Darkness, that without troubling my self to clear up this Chaos, I advise my Reader (as I do) to throw them all on a heap together and leave 'em, and to apply himself to the Consideration of these things as originally and as near their Spring-Head as possible. We shall by that Means, I hope, derive Light enough to see the beautiful Order of God's Providence, and to affix clear Ideas to these dark and intricate Terms, if ever we have occasion to make use of them in our ensuing Discourse. We will begin, and proceed by degrees.

V. God, a Being active, and infinitely free, bright and delicious, wills there should be other Beings besides himself, to partake of what he is, and be happy as he is. This is God's Design. This Happiness consists in the Possession of the Light and Joys of God: For God himself is not happy but in the Possession of himself; he finds no other Happiness but himself.

That another Being besides God may be happy, 'tis necessary there be, *First*, another Being besides God. *Secondly*, That it be not in the Power of this other Being to make or cause its own Happiness of it self, or with it self. *Thirdly*, That a beatifying Object be presented to this Being. *Fourthly*, That this same Being have not only a Power positively to admit, but also in a manner to cause or occasion, if you please, the Admission of the beatifying Object. *Fifthly* and lastly, That this beatifying Object shall act upon this Being in Proportion to its Reception of it into it self.

VI. If the Properties of God or his Attributes were incommunicable, God could not make any thing out of himself. For Being, Activity, Power. Understanding and Liberty being things that do properly belong to God, it would follow that besides God, nothing could

V. The Aim of Providence. Five things it ought to provide to attain this End.

VI. The first of these Requisites, a Being different from God. Whether in God

B 2

there be some things communicable, and others incommunicable.

Chap. I. be or act, perceive, will or determine it self. But this is against Experience. Therefore there is something in God that is communicable. But on the other Hand, Men are afraid, lest by asserting that what is in God may be communicated to other Beings besides himself, they should rob God of his Glory, or at least should change the Creatures into God. What must be done in this Case, on one hand, not to annihilate, on the other, not to divinise the Creatures? Must we betake our selves to the Distinction commonly made of God's Attributes, or of things that are in God, into communicable and incommunicable? This Distinction is obscure, and indeed false, as 'tis commonly propos'd. For the Attributes that are commonly reckon'd amongst the incommunicable ones, as Power (according to some) Infinity, Eternity, (*Sano sensu & ceteris paribus*) are as communicable as the other. Yet 'tis certain, 'tis necessary to make some such Distinction, if we take it right, but then we must take it in another Sense than is commonly given of it, tho' in Words it be the same. I will give the true ground of this Distinction.

VII. Two

sorts of

Communications, the

subjective

and the

objective.

VII. It must be noted that there are two sorts of Communications; the one whereof we may call *subjective*, the other *objective*. Let not these Terms affright you. I can light on no other to make the Truth plain, and nothing but a false Delicacy, or a Neglect of the most important Truths can make us reject 'em, seeing I intend to explain them so clearly that they shall easily be understood.

I call that a *Subjective Communication*, by which a thing whereof another partakes, is or becomes a Part of the Subject that partakes it. For Example. When I say, that Being, Life, Activity, Understanding and Will are communicated to me, I call this Communication subjective, because Being, Life, and the rest, make a part of my Nature, and are a part of the Subject myself.

I call that an *Objective Communication*, by which a thing whereof another partakes, is not nor does become a Part of its Nature, but is the Object of it, about which it is to be conversant, which is to fill it and perfect it. As for Example. when the Light of the Sun, or which is more, when the Divine Light is communicated

nicated to me, I call this Communication objective, Chap. I. because the Light, especially the Divine, which is the Son of God, is no Part of my Nature, but only the Object of it, an in-dwelling and interior Object; 'tis true, but not natural or essential. I am confident there are none but easily enough comprehend my Meaning.

VIII. When therefore 'tis demanded, whether the Things or Attributes of God are communicable? This Question admits two Senses, a subjective and an objective. I shall take it in the first Sense. I demand therefore, whether the things that are in God are subjectively communicable to any thing else but God?

I answer, they must needs be communicable; otherwise Creatures would be a meer nothing, incapable to participate any thing divine, even Objectively, which none will say. For I am persuaded, without renouncing all Reason no Man can hold, that God cannot become the Object of a Creature. But unless the Creature did communicate or partake subjectively of Being and Understanding, it could not communicate of the Divine Object. But these Properties, Being, Intellect and Will are originally in God alone. Therefore what is in God is communicable by a subjective Communication.

IX. But if it were so with all things that are in God, the Creature would be, or become subjectively God; in as much as all that is in God would be natural and essential to it. Here we must yet make a notable Distinction. I call it a notable one, to inculcate to you, that you are not here to expect frivolous and ridiculous Distinctions, as are most of those of the Schools. I treat here of the most solid and fundamental Notions in the World, and such as are inexhaustible Springs of Truths most important and of most general Use.

X. There are in God three kinds of Things or Relations, or Attributes, or Realities, or lastly, what you please to call them. The First are those we consider in the Divinity as a Subject or Ground which receives or admits something; such are, for Example, Being, and being Free, Power, Activity, Sensibility, Desire, the Faculties of Understanding and Acquiescing, and the like; which are directly refer'd to the Father. The Second are as it were the Objects of Lights presented

Chap. I. *to these first, and these are the bright Splendors of the Divinity or the Son of God. The Third are the substantial Emotions that result from the Union of what is subjective with what is objective in the Divinity; from the Union of the Faculties (as I may say) of God with their Object, or of the Father with the Son; and these are the substantial Joys and Delights of the Divinity, or the Holy Ghost.*

XI. *The things of the Father are communicable subjectively; those of the Son and Holy Ghost objectively.*

XI. Upon this Supposition, I say, that the things, Properties or Attributes of the first Order only are subjectively communicable to other things than God; that is to say, that God the Father may, if he pleases, cause to flow from his Being and Attributes, Emanations of Being and of Properties of the same Nature with his own, which become Parts of the Nature, or rather the very Nature of the Creature. I need not further prove or explain this. You may please to remember what has been said in the first Treatise, how the Soul of Man took its Birth and Origin from the Nature of God the Father. And this is plain of it self, there being no Body but knows the Soul of Man partakes subjectively of Being, Liberty, Faculties of Desire, of Understanding and Enjoying or Acquiescing, which are of the first Rank, or the subjective ones of the Divinity.

But it is not thus with the objective ones, the perfecting or beatifying ones, which are the Properties of the Son and Holy Spirit. 'Tis certain, if the Soul partakes of them, if they are communicable to it, 'tis only objectively, and not in a subjective manner; seeing 'tis plain the Light of the Son of God, or the Joys of the Holy Ghost are no Parts of the Nature of a human Soul, no more than the Properties of the Father consider'd as united to the Word and Spirit, in which Sense 'tis the Apostle says, *he that has not the Son, has not the Father neither.* His Properties as consider'd in Separation or Distinction from those of the Son and Holy Spirit, are the only communicable ones to the Creature subjectively.

XII. *The first of the above-nam'd*

XII. By this God has furnish'd the first thing necessary to his Design (a); by which he intending to

Requisites communicated Subjectively, and provided by Providence. (a) § 5.

to make something happy besides himself, has provided Chap. I. and made really to exist other Beings by the subjective Communication of himself, consider'd as a Subject receiving Light and Happiness, that so there might be another Subject receiving or capable to receive Light and Happiness as himself does.

Now this is what Divine Providence has equally and impartially communicated to every Man, or to every thing that should or could be born of Man. All Men, as to their Nature, do from their Origin partake of all the Properties of the Father, known and unknown. They have all Being, Liberty, Activity, Power, and the Faculty of Understanding, with the rest. In a Word, they all have whatever is necessary to make them Subjects capable of lodging an infinite and eternal Happiness, none excepted.

XIII. Great and wonderful things they are that God might communicate, and really did to Man; they are all the living and subjective Emanations of the Nature of the Father, *whose Race and Offspring we are (a)*; and 'tis prodigious Blindness in our new Philosophers (the Malebranchists) to deny that the Creatures have truly in them a Principle of Activity and Power; and especially to deny this of Man, that subjectively has in his Nature all the Properties and Attributes of the Father by the true Communication that God has made of them to him, excepting (and this is plain of it self) his absolute and eternal Independence, and the Production (I do not say a Capacity to receive, but the Production) of the Son and Holy Ghost. For it is flat Contradiction and Impossibility for Man to receive absolute Independence, or for him to depend and not depend; and for God, the Son and Holy Spirit to be produc'd by Man.

XIII. Excepting Independence and the Production of the Word and Holy Spirit; Man possesses by a subjective Communication all the Properties of the Father.

(a) Acts 17. 28, 29.

XIV. But God may, excepting that, communicate subjectively all the rest to Man, as the Faculties of acting, of Self-Preservation or Duration in Being, and even the Faculty of making other Beings different from the Sovereign Being. I touch again these Matters to confirm and clear the Ideas I have given in the first Treatise, as likewise to give clear Notions of the Terms of *Causality, Production and Concourse*. It being God's Design to represent himself as he is, and it being

XIV. Man participates subjectively of durable, active and productive Being.

Chap. I. impossible to do this but by communicating to things out of himself subjectively what he possesses as Father, distinguish'd from the Son and Holy Ghost; he must, upon Supposition of this his good Pleasure, as having in himself a durable Subsistence (I cannot express it better) Power and Activity, and the Faculty to produce his like (his beloved Son) communicate likewise to Man (our present Subject) a Principle of lasting Subsistence, of a powerful Activity, and of making or producing Beings like himself.

XV. Now
is this an
Act of
Choice in
him, but
natural.

XV. Only we must take notice, that as these things are not in God after one and the same manner, so likewise neither are they in Man after one and the same manner by God's Communication of them to him. Firm and lasting Subsistence is not in God by way of Choice and Freedom, but by Nature. 'Tis so likewise as to the Faculty of durable and self-preserving Subsistence in an intelligent Being, it is not in it by way of Act, much less by way of voluntary and free Act of the Creature, but 'tis in it by Nature, that is to say, because it is of the Nature and Constitution of a Being issuing from God, and made to represent God, not to tend to nothing, but to subsist always in the natural and subjective State wherein God has once put it, without needing continually God's assisting Hand effectually to reproduce it every Moment of its Duration.

XVI. The
natural
Concourse
of the
Schools,
the conti-
nual Re-
production
of the
Cartesians
and Male-
branchists
are Chi-
mera's.

XVI. So that there is nothing more false or fanciful than the *natural Concourse* invented by the Schoolmen, or the *continual Reproduction* of *Cartesianism*, but more especially that of *Malebranchism*, that generally extends this mysterious Reproduction or continual Creation not only to the Duration of Subjects, but also to the Reality of their Acts. A pleasant Thought this, to fancy the most Divine Productions of God, such as are of the same Nature with himself, do by their Constitution tend to nothing, that God must be always assisting his Hand to them again, continually exciting and reproducing the Acts of Creatures, even of such of 'em as are in a criminal and an abominable State! But let us keep to things in their natural State.

XVII. These

XVII. These Mistakes proceed from Mens con-
 founding Nature with Grace, and the subjective State
 of things with their objective, as I may so say. As
 Man is not the Cause of his Happiness, viz. of the Word
 of God, nor of his Holy Spirit, 'tis evident, that to be
 happy, or in a State of Grace, God as luminous and
 happy must unite himself to the Faculties and Acts of
 Man by an Act of Union on his Part, and that this Act
 of Union of God must not only answer one Part of the
 present Acts of Man, but continually to all the subse-
 quent ones; and so God must *concur* continually by
 the Light of his Son, and Peace of his Holy Spirit,
 with the succeeding and current Acts of Man. This
 is the true Concourse of God, whose Presence and in-
 deed *Precourse* or Prevention is so absolutely necessary,
 that without it the whole World would be nothing but
 a Company of *Polagians* and damn'd Persons. But to
 ascribe this or any thing like it to the Subsistence of the
 subjective and natural Realities of a Subject is meer
 Childishness and Ignorance. There is something like
 this in corporeal Nature, if we consider its subjective
 Realities on one side, and its objective on the other;
 which are the Order and Light. But this is not a Place
 to examine these things to the bottom.

XVII. The
 Source of
 these Chi-
 mera's. The
 Truth and
 Necessity of
 the true
 Concourse
 of God, nay
 and of his
 Precourse,
 or prevent-
 ing Con-
 course.

XVIII. As to the Activity and Power that God has
 communicated subjectively to Man, Man is by them
 become, and really is the *true* and proper Cause of his
 own Acts; because the *formal Reason* of Causality is af-
 ter a subjective manner in him. The *formal Reason* of
 Causality consists in this, that a thing has within it self
 a Power and Virtue, which being put in act, there ne-
 cessarily follows something else from such Actuation of
 its Power, and so necessarily, that unless such Effect
 did follow upon it, there would be Contradiction or
 Repugnance in such Cause, which by Supposition,
 would have within it self such Virtue, and would actu-
 ally exert it, and yet would not actually have such
 Virtue as the Event would manifest. For Example;
 supposing God that is a Being powerful and perfect,
 should actually will the Existence of something diffe-
 rent from himself; if this thing should not exist upon
 his willing the Existence of it, there would be Contra-
 diction in God, for in this Case the Will of a Being
 that

XVIII.
 Man is
 truly and
 properly
 the Cause
 of his own
 Acts. The
 formal
 Reasons of
 Causality.
 The first
 and second
 Causes.

Chap. I. that has Power would be the Will of a Being that had not Power. Therefore to avoid such Contradiction the thing must exist and necessarily follow in Virtue and Consequence of this Will, and so the Divine Will is a real and true Cause of 'em. This Necessity and effectual and consecutive Connexion between the one of these things and the other, is as plain as any thing in the World. So again, supposing it was the Will of God there should flow from all his subjective Realities a Subject that should represent him; it follows in virtue of this Divine Will and Production as from a *first Cause*, that when this Subject wills to dispose of any thing (in matter of its Acts) these Effects will follow in Virtue and Consequence of the Will of this Subject, as from an *emanated* constituted and *Second Cause*; for otherwise, the Subject would not be of an *emanated* Nature, participating of the subjective Properties of the Divinity; it would not represent the Activity and Power of God; which is contradictory to the Will of God. So that Man is truly and formally the real Cause of his natural Acts. I shall say something by and by of *occasional Causes* under which have lately been cover'd abundance of Chimera's. We shall only remark upon occasion of real Causes, that as the Principle of Activity and Power is in God naturally and not of Choice, and that 'tis the Exercise and Disposal of his Acts only that is in him arbitrarily and by Election, so it is likewise as to Man.

XIX. Why
Man is
free to pro-
duce his
like, and
God not.

XIX. It is not altogether so in the Parallel between the productive Faculty and the actual Production, that are in God and Man. The Necessity and Reason of this Disparity is this; God being most perfect and his own proper and necessary Happiness, he must of Necessity actually and continually produce his like. But Man not being able to produce God, who is the true Happiness; nor being himself, nor his Likeness, his own Happiness, it follows, that the Production of his like, much less the continual Production of it, is not necessary, but only accessory to his Happiness, and so free and of Choice as to the Act; for the Faculty is natural to him,

XX. You

XX. You see here the Subject which the Divine Providence (taking the Word in a very large Signification) has prepar'd to execute his Design on, of having other Beings to make happy as God. Here I would wish Men to remove a Scruple which I think has not yet perfectly been done, viz. why God does not annihilate the wretched Souls of the Damn'd, rather than suffer them to continue in that dreadful State; I could wish Men would heedfully take Notice of what has been said of the continual Duration of the Soul, that it is subjective, natural and necessary to it, by a divine and original Necessity. I do not say that God necessarily created the Soul, but that God intending to create the Soul by an arbitrary (and subjective) Communication of his divine Nature, and being pleas'd to produce it such, that it might be a lively Emanation and Resemblance of himself, it must necessarily be of an immortal Nature, contrary to what many, and even the *Catholics* themselves, think; and I my self once thought too. These Gentlemen are of Opinion, that the Reason of the continual Duration or Immortality of the Soul does so depend on the free Pleasure of God, that supposing the Soul to continue still of the same Nature it originally is; yet God might have will'd to have it mortal, and at last actually to cease to be; and that now there needs nothing but his Will to annihilate it. But this is false and contradictory. For if God could destroy a Soul, he might make the divine Nature whence the Soul proceeds, and whereof it is an Emanation and subjectively partakes, perishable and mortal; that is to say, not divine. He might also make what he design'd as the lively Representation of what he himself is, to be no such Representation. Things that are visibly contradictory.

XX. The Soul of Man is naturally and necessarily immortal. How God cannot annihilate it.

XXI. But yet we are not to imagine that any thing said here tends directly or indirectly to deny or call in question God's Power. For the Power of God does not consist formally in being able to contradict himself, and the Effects and Terms of it are not Destruction, but Reality and Position; or at most but a Negation or Retraction of objective Realities, and such as are offer'd conditionally, and not of subjective Realities that are given without all Condition. I would say,

XXI. Wherein the destructive Power of God consists. It does not respect the Natures or Substances of things.

Chap. I. that the Terms and Effects of Power are not to destroy the Natures of things, but that God having presented to these Natures his Light and Happiness as Objects to act in the Soul, on Condition the Soul be willing to turn towards them her Faculties and Acts; what God's Power can do here in Matter of Diminution of Realities, is, not to destroy Nature, but to withdraw and deny the Continuation of the Offer of the brightening and beatifying Object, upon which the Creature will be eternally and infinitely miserable. 'Tis this Consideration that ought to make the Creature fear the destructive Power of God, which destructive Power of God is yet never actuated on God's Part by a positive Act of Refusal proceeding from him; but by the Fault and Failure of the Soul, which will not receive the Offer of God, to which Failure God can no longer correspond by the Continuation of his Offer without contributing to the Insult and Sin of his Creature, and without contravening his first Design, which was to do nothing in the Soul without its Consent; yet is God so good, so compassionate, and so generous, as I may say, that could Souls be destroy'd by his Power, he would undoubtedly destroy all such as separate themselves from his Happiness. But it is meer Ignorance and Blindness of Spirit to believe this Possibility, and much more to expect it, or to affirm its Futurition, as those wicked Men do, that are seduc'd by the Dotage of Socinus, and give themselves up to Wickedness, or the Forgetfulness of God, upon the wretched and deceitful Hopes of Annihilation.

The second and third things requisite.

XXII. (2.) The Second thing which I said (a) was to be suppos'd or consider'd in Beings God intended to make happy, is, that these Beings be not able of themselves to make or cause their own Happiness. I have already said enough upon this Article to shew that so it is in respect of Man or the human Soul, and that it cannot be otherwise; it being impossible for Man to produce the infinite Object, which is the true Happiness;

XXII. (2.) The Second thing requisite in Beings created to be happy, is, that they have not Power of themselves to make themselves happy. (a) Suprà § 5:

ness : For the eternal, infinite and perfect Object cannot be produc'd by a temporal, finite and imperfect Subject. Nor do all the Acts of a created Subject by any Virtue or necessary Consequence infer (I do not say the Object, but not so much as) the Presence of the Object. For set the whole Soul and all its Faculties on acting as vigorously as you will, nothing will necessarily follow from the Soul alone and all her Acts, but Darknesh, Confusion, and anxious Pains, as I have solidly prov'd in more than one Place of the (a) first Treatise. So that Man is nor, nor can be, the true Cause of his Happiness tho' we should suppose he could cause in himself all sorts of sensible and imaginable Ideas and Delectations, which are indeed but Miseries to a Soul that is capable of an infinite Object, and sensible of its own infinite Emptiness.

XXIII. This Truth confirms and explains that which I (b) touch'd on the Subject of Sin, or the Liability of Man ; who I have shewn could not but be liable to fall ; which is founded, amongst other Considerations, upon this, that he could not be the Cause of his Happiness, or that he could not find his Happiness in his own Nature, in his own Acts, or in the Commerce of himself with himself. This Truth is also the Foundation of that Humility (wherein those Spirits that never sinn'd are constantly before God) and likewise of that not only natural but voluntary and amorous Dependance, whereby the Saints continually submit themselves to the Divine Majesty. I only note by the by the principal Consequences of these radical Truths, and so pass on to the third Consideration upon the Beings which God designs to render happy, and by his Providence to lead to that End.

XXIV. (3.) The Third thing requisite is this, that there be presented to these Beings an Object beatifying, luminous and calming. Now this is what God has done with reference to all created Spirits ; and would have done it with relation to all Men, had he created more, or if Man and his Offspring had not fallen into Sin : For we here consider things before the Fall. This is what I call Preventing Grace, or the Offer of preventing Grace. This is by God's Providence prepar'd also.

Chap. I.

(a) Oecon.

of the

Creation,

Chap. 1.

§ 29, &c.

Chap. 8.

§ 10, &c.

Chap. 9.

§ 7, &c.

Chap. 14.

§ 20, &c.

and Chap.

15. §. 17.

XXIII.

Man could

not but be

labile. The

Humility

and Depen-

dance of

the Saints.

(b) Oecon.

of Sin,

Chap. 1.

§ 5.

XXIV.

(3.) The

Third

thing re-

quir'd to a

Subject God

intends to

make hap-

py, the

beatifying

Object, or

Chap. I.  ting Grace, because it prevents Man's Co-operation or Admission, or rather his very seeking of it. I think I have sufficiently treated of this in the Treatises of Creation, of Sin, and the Restoration. So that all I have here to say of it respects only certain Terms commonly us'd in this Matter, tho' very obscurely; which therefore are become very confus'd and perplexing. I will here give you my Explication of them.

XXV. An XXV. When God presents his Light and his Love
Explica- to the Soul before her seeking it, this is call'd, *Preven-*
tion of the ting Grace, which is the *Præcursor* or *Concursus præius*
Terms, of of the Schools, which is to be apply'd to Matters of
preventing Grace, as has been (a) already noted.

and simul- As the Creature could not be lastingly and solidly
taneous happy, except this Offer of Grace were made every
Concourses; Moment of its Duration, when God does this, (as he
of Succour. truly does) this is what we call God's *Concurrence*, the

(a) Above simple *Concursus*, or *Concursus simultaneous* of the School-
§ 17. men. And this Concurrence has Place, as I said, in
Matters of Grace, even before the Fall. And when
there is any thing met with that opposes God thus
offering himself to Man, and yet God will continue
his Offer notwithstanding this Obstacle, this is call'd
God's *succouring* of Man; his *Succursus* or *Auxilium* in
the Schools.

The general and simple Rule that God has set himself in this Case. The Will which God has to offer his Grace and his Happiness, or his Light and his Love to every intelligent Creature, issu'd from him; this Will not being inconstant in God, is call'd a *Rule*; and as respecting all intelligent Beings without exception, may be call'd, the *general, universal*, and, if you please, the *simple Rule*, that God has *prescrib'd himself*, according to the Tenour whereof he will regulate his Procedure with all his Creatures. I say, these things are in substance the same with regard to all intelligent Creatures (before the Fall) as to their eternal Happiness; that is to say, that the Offer which God has made of his Light and of his Grace to each and every of them, is equally sufficient to make them happy. And when I speak of a *general Act* and *general Way*. I must not be understood of logical and metaphysical Abstractions, separate from all Individuality, and hoisted into the wide Air of Universals. The Act of God, by which he offers himself

himself to his Creature, is in God most singular and most individual; but this Singularity and this Individuality is extended and offer'd not only to one individual, but to all and every of them; and so is both a singular and general, an universal and individual Act. The same is to be said of the Ways of this Act.

As there are in the one only Nature of God most perfect and infinite Varieties and Multiplicities, in Conformity to which the Spirits which he has produc'd have in the Fund of one and the same Nature (which they possess) almost infinite Dispositions and Varieties; so, tho' the Action and Manner in which God communicates himself to 'em be the same in substance in respect of 'em all, as to one and the same substantial Happiness, yet this Act may be diversify'd and vary'd in an Infinity of most perfect Ways and Manners, all different and unequal in regard to the different Constitution and Disposition of each Spirit. This we may call the *particular Acts, Gifts and Graces of God.*

Particular Acts, Gifts and Graces of God.

Every angelick Mind, and every intelligent Creature, has some of these, which are not in the same manner common to others. But this Diversity makes no essential Difference in the gratuitous Act of God, nor is it opposite to its Generality and Universality, nor to its Identity in relation to the substance of eternal Happiness.

XXVI. Thus has God amply furnish'd the *Third* XXVI. thing requir'd to the Subject he intends to make happy, he has, I say, sufficiently provided this Requisite by the Offer of preventing Grace, by his Concourse, by the establishing of a general, universal and simple Rule, by a general and yet singular Act, by universal and yet individual Ways, and likewise by special Gifts and Graces. I know not what more can be desir'd in matter of offering an Object to an intelligent and free Subject.

The third of the above- nam'd Requisites prepar'd and communicated by God's Providence

to the Subjects God designs to save.

XXVII. We have seen in the first Treatise, that God having given to Man not only Faculties purely divine, but also (to say nothing of human Reason and the *Outward Objects* which Providence administers likewise.

XXVII. Outward Objects which Providence administers likewise.

Chap. I. the Imagination) a Body and bodily Faculties, he has also presented him with Objects suitable to all these Faculties. Tho' this does not directly belong to Grace and eternal Happiness, yet may it be reduc'd to it, and serves as a means a little more remote than those that are purely divine. They are indirect and secondary ones, or what you please to call them. As these things are to come into Consideration in the Question of divine Providence, and will make a considerable Part of it after the Fall, we must see how the Divine Providence was concern'd in them during Man's Rectitude.

XXVIII.

The Corporeal Subject which God gave Man subjectively for his accessory Happiness.

XXVIII. God to fasten Man more closely and dependently on him, and consequently to render him more easily and accessorily happy, was pleas'd not only to make him what was necessary to render him happy; to wit, a Being purely spiritual and divine, but also to make him what he might not have been, tho' he were happy; I mean, it was his Pleasure to make him a corporeal and material Being. So, he gave to Man subjectively, and as Part of his Nature, a Body, of active bodily Faculties; for the natural Subsistence and continual Duration whereof it is not necessary that God any longer act, preserve and *concurr* by either a continual Communication, Reduplication, or subjective Reproduction, as we have (a) seen that this was not necessary in regard of the Being and Powers of his Soul. It is enough that God once gave these things Being, and that this Act of God tend not to nothing. Hence it must follow that Man's Body, its Activity and Faculties will last for ever.

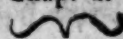
(a) Above
§ 16, 17.

XXIX.

Man's Body is incapable of producing its accessory Happiness and Blessedness.

XXIX. Man might touch, and as it were feel his Dependance upon God, by the Existence of his Body, which was not of his own making; but he might yet more do so by the Consideration that his Body alone with all its Activity would have been to him only an Instrument of Pain and Disquiet, if God had not encompass'd it with other Bodies to cherish and support it by their Light, their Beauty, Harmony, and by their benign and kindly Penetrations and Communications; so that Man, besides the Subject of his Body, stood in need of the Objects of a bright and well-order'd World.

Now

Now Man was much less capable of producing such Chap. I.
a World, and of giving it Light, Order and Harmony, 
than he was of producing his own Body. And hence
he was advertis'd to look for no such thing from him-
self, but to cast his Eyes up to God.

XXX. Indeed, it is God alone that can and does XXX. The
present Man with these Objects, I mean, with a beau- *Divine*
tiful, bright and perfect World. And tho' this World *Providence*
being once created can no more tend to nothing, nor *furnishes*
ever cease to be as to its Substance and Matter; yet *the corpo-*
might the Use, or the general and universal Offer of *real Man*
all that is in it have been refus'd to Man's Body (excep- *with corpo-*
ting some small space of it necessary to contain it) if *real and*
God, the Lord of this World, had not made him the *beautiful*
objective and universal Offer of it, as long as his Body *Objects for*
lasted. Much more necessary therefore was it that *his acces-*
God should concur to present to him this Object in a *sory Happi-*
State of perfect Harmony, Light and Beauty. And in- *ness. God's*
deed it seems the Light, Beauty, Accord, the sweet *Concourse*
and benign Influences of Bodies do more need the con- *in things*
tinual Concourse of God, than the Duration of their Being *corporeal.*
and Activity consider'd simply and without Order. I
will not simply say this was so order'd by God, to call to
our Minds the Beauty and Goodness of God, but will
endeavour to say something more precise and determi-
nate, tho' what I say will come to the same Consideration.

XXXI. We have said before that God commu- XXXI.
nicated himself to spiritual Creatures, as Father, Son, *God has*
and Holy Ghost; as Father, in a subjective manner, *communi-*
in giving them subjectively and as Part of their Nature, *cated him-*
Being, Power, Activity, and other Faculties; as Son, *self (but*
in an objective manner, by offering them (as their spi- *after a*
ritual and internal Object) his divine Light; and as *shadowy*
Holy Ghost, after the same objective manner, in offer- *manner*
ing them his divine Joys, Accords and Delights; and *only) to*
that these Objects not being in the Creatures as Part *corporeal*
of their Nature, must be offer'd them by God's conti- *Creatures,*
nual Concourse. There is something like this in things *as Father,*
corporeal. God has communicated himself to these as *Son, and*
Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost; but after an ex- *Holy Ghost.*
ternal, umbratile and gross manner, and which we may
call dead in comparison of the spiritual Communica-
tion; yet such as is true and indeed wonderful, if we
C well

Chap. I. well consider it. For it is most true, that all that is in the World, even what is most corporeal, has been made by either the lively or shadowy Communication of the most *Holy Trinity*, and after its Image more or less lively; and the Heresy that denies the adorable Mystery of the Tri-une God is so absurd, that none but blind and brutish Persons devoid of all solid Knowledge of God, of themselves and the Creatures can be led away by it; since every thing carries upon it ineffaceable and bright Marks and Footsteps of this grand Truth, except it may be the damn'd Creatures, of which I do not here speak; but of Creaturs as God made them.

XXXII. XXXII. Now God has communicated himself in a corporeal and umbratile manner to Bodies, as Father, by the Creation of Matter, Extension, its Activity and its different Motions, Virtues and Powers. And as this Communication is subjective, that is to say, these things belong to the Nature of the Objects or Bodies, hence it comes that God having once created them, they subsist in virtue of this Creation without needing any new Concourse or new Production either of their Being or their Activity, for their subjective Subsistence. But it is not altogether so as to other sorts of Communications.

XXXIII. XXXIII. God communicated or represented himself umbratily to corporeal things as Son, by that Light Irradiation, and bright Effort that every thing makes from its centre to other Creatures, to discover to them the Idea of its Beauty; (I speak here of things as they were when God first made them) and he communicated or represented himself to the Creatures and by them as Holy Ghost, by that sweet and agreeable Influence, Connexion and Union which things have with one another, whereon depends their Perfection and Fruitfulness. Now as the Communication which the Son and Holy Ghost make of themselves to intelligent Creatures, is not a subjective Communication, in that Sense we have explain'd it in, but an objective one only, which, tho' internal and the most intimate possible, is made by the Offer of a continual and gratuitous Concourse; so likewise this shadowy Communication and Representation of the Son and Holy Ghost in corporeal things, is made in them by a continual Influence and

and Concourse of Acts presenting and offering the Son and Holy Spirit after the same manner and in Conformity to the internal Act or Offer which the Son and Holy Ghost continually make of themselves to the Soul. My Meaning is this, that in such Measures as the Son and Holy Spirit do constantly and inwardly offer to the Soul their Light and their Joys, in the very same also does the same Son and Holy Spirit make upon corporeal things that luminous Impression, or rather Direction, and that harmonious Influence of these things, the Enjoyment whereof they offer to Man's Body.

Hence it comes to pass, that every one shall in such a Measure enjoy the external Light and material Pleasures, as he does the spiritual Light and Joys; and as far as he has fitted himself to receive the one, so far also has he prepar'd himself to receive the other; just as he has made way for the Offer and Operation of the Son and Holy Spirit presenting themselves to, and acting inwardly and divinely in his Soul; just so will he have made room for the Offer and Operations of the Son and Holy Spirit presenting themselves outwardly, and acting, or directing the Actions of Creatures, embellishing and fertilizing them externally, that these Objects of his Body may in their way make him happy, that from the Enjoyment of them the Soul may in acknowledgment and Gratitude return to God the Source of its Happiness, and may see him drawn in himself internally, and by proper Characters, even upon corporeal things.

*Whence the
Inequality
of corporeal
Delights
in eternal
Life pro-
ceeds.*

XXXIV. I fancy Thoughts so abstracted, or if you please, so screw'd up, and so little material, will not relish with all. and the rather because they are out of their proper Place, and pure Digressions. If so, I am sorry; and I could heartily wish Men were not so fleshly and so beastly as not to be able to raise their Thoughts to things on high; and I heartily desire that my self in the first Place were rid of my Carnality and Brutishness, that will not suffer me to say any thing but what is very poor and mean concerning the infinite and incomparable Grandures of our God, which yet shall not hinder me from telling them after my childish and imperfect Way. And why should I not, since

XXXIV.
*The Usefulness of
these
things, and
their Con-
formity
with the
Scripture.*

Chap. I. the Scripture does so, and refers to the Word, or the Son of God, the Production of Light, the *fiat Lux*; and to the Holy Spirit to have presided, as I may say, over the fostering the Fertility, and the Immeation of things towards their orderly settling and agreeably mixing together, & *spiritus Dei incubabat aquis*; the Spirit of God sate or brooded upon the Waters? I will not answer those that complain of this as a Digression, for this will appear groundless to any one that understands what it is to search and explain thoroughly the first Truth of things.

XXXV. XXXV. I very well remember, that in the (a) first Treatise I have spoken of the Light, the Beauty, the Goodness, the Immeation, the Accord and Fecundity of things, as if they were Properties belonging to 'em, and tended of themselves to Duration and Continuation without needing the Concourse and Reproduction of God; which seems contrary to what I now assert. I own I had not then so well consider'd this Matter, and that a false Sense might be drawn from what I there say, and possibly a contradictory one, if compar'd to what I here advance. But if we will consider things to the bottom, I said nothing there but what may have, and indeed has a very true Sense, which is this, and you may take it either for an Explication or Rectification of my first Thoughts.

(a) Oecon. Things have two sorts of Properties, either subjective, and such as result from their Nature; or objective, that result from the Union or Concourse of things with their Objects; and so, tho' the Light, the Beauty, the Goodness, the Accord, and fertile kind of Communication of things are not their subjective Properties, yet are they their objective; and tho' they be inherently in a Subject, yet are they there only from the Result of its Union with the Object. These Properties tend to endure and continue as well on the part of their true Cause the Son of God and the Holy Spirit (who are so far from withdrawing them, that they persist to communicate them eternally;) as on the part of their occasional Causes, (what I mean by them I shall tell you by and by) and of their Subjects, which have Faculties dispos'd and after their way aspiring after them, whence it is that I have somewhere call'd these Faculties

ties

ties (a) *perfective*, that is to say, tending towards Perfection; yet without truly causing it.

Again, it is true, that the objective Properties do or do not stand in need of God's continual Concourse, according to the Sense we give those Words. For if we take it for a continual Reiteration of new Acts of God, as if one Act of God being exerted, it tended to nothing, and God were oblig'd to exert another in its Room; in this Sense they have no need of his continual Concourse; but they have, if you take it for an Act of the Son and Holy Spirit, which Act is conditional with respect to Man, that is to say, which will not subsist to Man, or will not act upon his Body, or upon the Creatures that make Impression upon it, but so long as Man does not resist the Son of God and the Holy Spirit as offering themselves and divinely acting upon the Interior of his Soul.

Hence it comes, that such as shall reject the internal and divine Offers and Operations of the Son and Holy Spirit of God, shall also find themselves void of their external Operations, of the external and material Light, Beauty, Harmony and Delights. A Lesson (this by the by) for such as love not God, nor seek his Divine Face, nor his holy Inspirations in their Hearts. This is what has already befallen the Devil, and will assuredly be the Case of all impenitent Sinners.

XXXVI. There is, to avoid Confusion, a more particular Remark to be made upon the Fecundity or Fertility of the Creatures, than upon the other Properties I have been speaking of. And 'tis this, that this Property contains two things, viz. Activity or the bare Reproduction of it self, which is a subjective Property proceeding from God the Father, and the Reproduction of it self in Conjunction with Light, Goodness, and delicious and glorious abundance, which must be reckon'd among the objective Properties resulting from the Union of the bare thing produc'd with the bright and blessed Offers of the Son and Holy Ghost. This being so, the Fecundity of Creatures, as we consider in it barely the Reproduction of themselves, is a Property in them never to be lost, without needing God's continual Concourse: For without any such Concourse the Creatures do as true Causes reproduce

Chap. I.

(a) Oecon
of the
Creation.
Chap. 6.
§ 20.

Those that
reject the
internal
Operations
of the Son
of God and
the H. Spirit
deprive
themselves
of the external ones.

XXXVI.
There is in
the Production
of
Creatures
something
subjective;
and something
objective;
one whereof
has need of
God's Con-
course, the
other not.

Chap. I.  duce themselves, and do naturally tend thus to produce one another as real, but second Causes. But if we consider the Fecundity of Creatures as a continual Effusion of Light and Happiness, the Creature does not tend towards it. nor contribute any thing to it but as an admissive and occasional Cause, and not as a true Cause, either first or second: For the Word of God and the Holy Spirit alone are the only and true Cause of this, and such a Cause as does on its Part always tend to reproduce or augment or continue its bright and blessed Effects, so far as the Subject endow'd with Faculties tending and breathing this Way, does not make it self incapable of them by its Irregularities, which it has been guilty of, or would be, should it naturally reproduce it self, but this is sufficient to prevent the Difficulties which might arise from the above-cited Place. Let us now pursue the Subject before us.

XXXVII. *A general and particular Concourse, Rule, Ways, and Acts of God in external things.* XXXVII. Now as in the Offer which God makes of the internal and beatifying Object to the Soul we have taken notice of a Concourse, of a general and universal Rule and Way, of a general and yet singular and individual Act, and also of special Acts; we may likewise observe the same things in the Offer that God makes of Light and Beauty, and of the harmonious and fruitful State of Creatures to Man's Body. He will offer them constantly on his Part, and of this his Will he has made a Rule. He executes this his Will equally and in the same manner in Substance towards all (and this makes the *Generality and Singularity of his Act and of his Ways*;) For all receive from him these Advantages as far as is necessary for their accessory Happiness, and to be brought this way to the pure Contemplation of God, and to a Dependence on him; tho' there be in this substantial Equality of the Offer of God a thousand Diversifications and *Particularities*, not only as God produces in divers manners Light and other beautiful and good Qualities in the bright and pleasant Objects; but likewise as these bright and pleasing Objects, or if you will, their Light, Beauty and Harmony do strike different Persons diversely, as these Persons are, as to what is accessory of Constitutions differing from one another; and I believe, that as there are not in the World, no not in the World of Glory, two Persons that are in

all things exactly alike, so neither are there any two that are exactly and equally affected by the same Objects; and consequently it is probable there are not any two Persons that have exactly the same Sensations of the same thing without any accessory Difference in the manner of Perception. Chap. I.

XXXVIII. I have said enough of the third thing which I said was requisite to God's Design of having other Beings besides himself happy; which was that these Beings should have a beatifying Object presented them. We have seen abundantly how God thus provided, as well by offering to the Soul of Man constantly, universally and singularly, the Light of his Son and the Joys of his Spirit, by which it becomes solidly and perfectly happy; as likewise by offering to his Body external Light and Pleasures, that he might be also accessorially happy, and might by this superficial Happiness be led to the Contemplation of the solid Felicity, and to a Dependence on God the Fountain of it. *xxxviii. God has amply provided the third Requisite above-nam'd.*

XXXIX. Before I pass to the fourth thing to be considered, I desire it may be noted, that altho' it be God himself that produces and upholds by his Word and by his Spirit, the Light, the Goodness, or the Order and Fertilisation, the vivifying Life, as I may say, of the Creatures, or the Vigour of the universal Spirit; yet this does not say, that either Man or the Creatures are void of Activity, Force or Powers, and that God acts immediately all in them; no such thing. The Creatures always have subjectively ever since God's first Donation of it to them, Activity, Motion, and the Powers depending on them, without God's any more interposing as to this; but all these would be devoid of Light, and of all sweet and living Vigour, except God by a constant Application did produce in them these beautiful Impressions. The Case is the same with Man. He is properly active, acting and reproducing himself, he disposes of himself, excites and governs the Acts of his Faculties; but he can neither cause Life nor Vigour, nor Light in the external Objects. This is much the same with what I said concerning Fecundity. I design not to carry this Speculation higher, nor be still telling you I consider things here as they were before the Fall. *xxxix. Nor does it hence follow that the Creatures are destitute of all active Power.*

Chap. I.

The fourth and fifth Things requir'd to Happiness.

XL. (4.)
The fourth
thing re-
quisite to a
Being that
is to be
made hap-
py, the
free and
active Ad-
mission of
its Object.

XL. (4.) The fourth Requisite to a Being that is to be made divinely happy, is, that this Being have a Power not only passively to receive, but in a manner to cause or occasion (if you please) the Admission or Presence of the beatifying Object. Tho' I intend to mention here only the divine and spiritual Object which makes the solid Happiness, yet what I say here and in the following Article, may by Parity of Reason be apply'd to the external Objects which God offers brightly and sweetly to Man's Body, for his accessory Happiness, thereby to bring him back to the Contemplation and Fountain of his divine Felicity. I say therefore, to make the Happiness of an intelligent Creature solidly and divinely perfect and delightful, the beatifying Object is not to be receiv'd into the Soul in a way meerly passive, and as it were quite mechanical, but in an active manner, and such an one as comes very near to Causality. Whoever will but call to mind the eighteen or twenty Reasons that I have alledg'd in the first (a) Treatise, to shew that Man must needs have been made free, will also see Reason why his Happiness must not have been purely passive, but active also; and so will make it needless for me to say any thing here more particularly on that Point; only that this supposes two things; first, that it be left to the Liberty of the intelligent Creature to let the beatifying Object enter into it at its own Choice and Discretion. Secondly, that it not only introduce it into it self barely by an Act of Liberty and Consent, but also that it seize it and force it, as it were, in an active manner, and so in a sort cause the Entry and Admission of it into its Interior.

(a) Oecon.
of the
Creation.
Chap. 17.

XLI. That
it follows
hence that
God was to
furnish Man
with Li-
berty, and that Liberty was not to be determin'd by any absolute De-
ree, Act or Foreknowledge.

XLI. I have nothing to add upon the first of these two things but this, that we must not part it from the second, and that we may observe that it hence follows, that

that the Divine Providence was to give Man such a Chap. II. Liberty as was neither to be predetermin'd, nor determin'd or bounded by any Decree or by any physical and irresistible Act; nor by any infallible Foresight; (a) Oecon. I think I have in the first Tract (a) sufficiently demonstrated the Possibility and the metaphysical Truth of Chap. 13. this, as well in Relation to God as to the intelligent Creatures, which cannot be suppos'd free without overthrowing both Predetermination, and all pretended eternal Decrees touching the particular Acts, and all determinate Foreknowledge touching all their Particularities; for the making a Creature free is formally and essentially the making of a Creature whose Actions we will neither determine nor determinately know till the Creature does from it self please to determine it self to act so or so. One may indeed foresee many things concerning such a Creature as possible; and if you will, as probably future, but not as certainly so; this is contradictory, in as much as the Principle of its Futurity is in a Creature as a Principle that may act or not act, to the very Moment that it shall please to determine it self. The Difficulties that seem to arise from this Truth respecting chiefly the Events of things since the Fall, I shall defer their Consideration till I come to treat of God's Providence after Man's Sin.

XLII. The Activity which the Soul is to set on *What the* Work (as I may say) about its divine Object, to cause *Activity of* it in some sort to enter into her, is the Act of the Faculty of Desire, which she must joyn to the Act of her *the Soul is.* Consent which she gives to God to come and act with- *That Providence* in her. The Soul must not only give her simple Consent to the divine Offer and Will, but must also draw *has en-* it into her by her Desire, whereof we have (a) elsewhere seen the Conditions. She must therefore have a *dom'd Man with it.* free Desire, or a Liberty desiring; which Requisite (a) Oecon. of Co- God has abundantly provided both as to her Desire and operat. Chap. 6. as to her Liberty. For the Nature of the Soul, which § 3. he has made, is in its most interieur Fund, nothing but a Principle desiring infinite Happiness; and this Desire is immediately put in act as soon as ever the Liberty. which can do it, takes it off from all particular and finite Objects, and leaves it to it self. I have in another Place handled this Subject more particularly,

XLIII. Now

XLIII. The
Act of the
Soul is in a
manner the
Cause of
the Intro-
mission of
its Object.
The false
Notion of
an occasio-
nal Cause.

XLIII. Now the Act of this free Desire has a certain Connexion with the Entrance and intimate and unitive Presence of the beatifying Object, by reason of which Connexion it is that we may look on this Act as a kind of Cause of this Entrance and this Presence of the Object which is annex'd to it. 'Tis true, it is not the Efficient, proper and true Cause of the Presence of the Object, but it is such a Cause of it as one may call *admissive* or *receptive*, or if you please to make use of a Word that has made Noise enough in the World already, *occasional*; provided we affix to this Word a Conception more real and more solid than some new, and a little too superficial Philosophers have given us of it. They commonly say that is an occasional Cause, between which and the Effect there is no necessary Connexion. Properly speaking, this Definition is not true, or at least not exact; and were it to be admitted, I see no Reason why an occasional Cause should rather be follow'd by one Effect, than by another; it would naturally be indifferent to every thing, and there would be no more natural Connexion between the Desire of Good and the Enjoyment of it, than between the Desire of Good and the Privation of it, or the Possession of Misery; but this is grossly absurd.

XLIV. The true
Notion of
an occasio-
nal Cause;
it has a
natural
and neces-
sary Con-
nexion
with its
Conse-
quents or
Effects.

XLIV. There is a natural and indeed a necessary Connexion between the *occasional Cause* and its Effect; but that which differences it from a real, true and efficient Cause is this, that the Effect does not follow or proceed from any Power that is subjectively in the occasional Cause, but meerly from the Virtue that is in the first Cause, or in God. I will endeavour to make this as clear as possible I can.

It is certain that the Works of God and the Tyes that are among them are not Things and Rencontres purely occasional and indifferent to one another, without Reason, Proportion and Wisdom, without any natural need they have one of another. God's Wisdom will not admit of this. It cannot suffer that the Reason of things should be grounded meerly on an Occasion without Reason and any natural Necessity. So neither has he thus dispos'd things as it will evidently appear if we consider them but a little more narrowly.

Let us suppose it was God's Pleasure to produce a Chap. I.
 spiritual Subject, that he might make it happy by the
 Infusion of his Divine Light and Blessedness; and like-
 wise a corporeal Subject to perfect it by external Light
 and Goods. It is visible, that because he is wise and
 does not cross his own Design, there must be some
 Proportion between these Subjects and their Objects,
 and that the Nature of the one must be capable to re-
 ceive the other. This Capacity and Proportion that
 is between them, is the Tye, or rather the *natural*
ground of the Tye, that is between these things. And it
 is plain, that the Nature of a Subject that is made for
 a certain Object, has naturally more Connexion, or a
 ground of a greater Connexion with that Object than
 with any other different or contrary one. Here we
 see already a Reason of a Tye, or of the ground of a
 natural Tye between these sorts of things.

Nevertheless, as the Subject cannot actually enjoy
 the Object but by means of one of its Acts, the
 Question is whether there be a necessary Connexion
 between the Act of the Subject and the Entrance or
 Presence of the Object. To which we answer, that there
 is, (but this Necessity is a Necessity of Consequence
 and not of Production) for God having made the Sub-
 ject on purpose to receive its Object, if the Object
 should not enter when the Subject prepares and fits it
 self to receive it, that is to say, in spiritual things, if
 when the Soul freely directs its Desire void of every
 thing else towards God, God should not then brightly
 descend into the Soul; and if when the Body opens its
 Eyes towards the corporeal Light, this Light should
 not enlighten them, God would then dispose of his spi-
 ritual and corporeal Light contrary to his own Design
 and the Dispositions he has put in the things he crea-
 ted. But this is impossible, and the contrary must ne-
 cessarily be true, by reason of God's Wisdom and
 Uniformity with himself. Therefore there is a neces-
 sary Connexion between the Acts of Subjects and the
 Acts of Objects upon them and in them. And there-
 fore there is a natural Reason and a necessary Connex-
 ion between what we call *occasional Causes* and their
Effects.

XLV. The
Difference
between
real or
physical
and occa-
sional
Causes.

XLV. But is not this to turn occasional Causes into real and physical ones? No; for what makes a Cause a physical one, is this, that the Effect follows from it by virtue of a Power that is subjectively in it, which neither is nor can be in an occasional Cause. For it is not from any Virtue or Power of a desiring Soul, that the divine Light comes into it upon its Desire. As likewise it is not from any Virtue or Force in the opening of the Eyes of the Body, that the light and the bright and good Objects become present to them. This Force and this Virtue by which the Objects, become present to the Body, is subjectively and truly in God alone. And so it is God only that is the true and real Cause of the Presence of all bright Objects as well divine as material. The Acts of Man's Soul and of his Body are only the occasional Causes of them, between which and the Enjoyment of the Objects there is nevertheless a Reason of a necessary Connexion. But the Soul is still the true Cause of the Acts of her Desire and Consent, as well as of the Act of opening her Eyes.

XLVI. An
occasional
and a phy-
sical Cause.
The first is
found only
in Matters
of Grace,
the other
only in
Hell.

XLVI. Lastly, to say in three Words what the System, what the whole Truth and Use of occasional, of real, or physical Causes is, *Every thing is the physical and natural Cause of the direct and immediate Acts of its own Faculties, and is only the occasional Cause of the Acts which the bright and beatifying Objects exert upon it.* So that occasional Causes have no Place save during the Work of our eternal Salvation or but in that blessed State to which God designs to bring us, both Soul and Body. Out of these two States every thing is natural, and the Work of Creatures. 'Tis Ignorance, Confusion and Blindness to tell us, as our new Philosophers do, that there are no Causes but occasional ones in Nature. There are no such Causes but only in Grace, when the Question is, what Man contributes to the illuminating and beatifying Acts, but not when we enquire what Man does as to the Acts that admit the Illumination and Blessedness offer'd. But in meer Nature depriv'd of all bright and beatifying Acts and Objects, I would say in Hell, (here you have a Notion of Hell) there is no such thing as an occasional Cause. All Causes there are physical. For where-ever there is an occasional Cause, there nothing can supply the Place of the

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true Cause and its Act, but God only and his immedi- Chap. I.
ate Act. But since the Creation, wherein God once
exerted a dark Act that gave Birth to active Beings, he
never acted immediately by himself any more, but
only brightly and peacefully; a way of acting never
to be found in Hell; therefore will there be no occa-
sional Causes there. I will not stay to explain more
clearly what may perhaps exercise some cavilling Wits,
the Meaning of some of the Expressions I just now
us'd. Whoever fully comprehends them, will under-
stand a great deal more than either I can or will say
here.

XLVII. Let us return now to our principal Article. *XLVII.*
or to our fourth Requisite; and then let us see how *The Provi-*
the Divine Providence has taken care that the Subject *dence of*
it intends for Happiness be able to admit, and in a *God has*
manner to cause the Presence of its Happiness, or the *supply'd*
Act of the Object that is to make it happy. The Di- *the fourth*
vine Providence has done this by establishing the Act *Requisite*
of Desire of the Soul and of her free Consent, the oc- *by establish-*
casional Cause of the unitive and efficacious Presence *ing the free*
of the infinitely bright and delicious Object. And to *Desire of*
the end this Desire and Liberty might be suited to the *the Soul,*
infinite Object, and might be truly free, God has been *the occasi-*
pleas'd neither to limit nor determine, nor to foresee *onal Cause*
determinately their Ways of acting. The same in Pro- *of her Illu-*
portion is to be said of the Happiness of the Body, of *mination.*
its bright and delicious Objects, and of the Liberty to
dispose of the Acts of its Faculties.

XLVIII. (5.) The Fifth and last of the things re- *XLVIII.*
quir'd to make a Being happy, which God created for *(5.) The*
that Purpose, was, as we said before, that the beatifying *fifth Re-*
Object should act in this Being in Proportion as it was *quisite*
receiv'd into it, that is, in the same Measures and De- *above-*
grees in which the Desire and Liberty being turn'd to- *mention'd.*
wards him, had occasionally receiv'd it into the Soul, *The Action*
which is thus made the living Temple, and is fill'd *of the Ob-*
with the adorable and powerfully acting Being of God *ject. The*
the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. But if ever Provi- *unchange-*
dence thought and took care of any thing it was of *able Rule*
this, which God has so resolv'd and is so fully set up- *by which*
on, *God acts*
this, that
he act in
the Soul

just so far as the Soul is freely turn'd towards him.

Chap. I.

on, that one would say, (might we speak so) that God seems willing to BE only for this. Therefore is it that he has establish'd for a *Truth*, for a *Rule*, for an **UNIVERSAL**, *impartial* and *immutable* **DECREE**, that He, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the most Blessed and Adorable Trinity, will insinuate and operate in the Soul by transforming and divinizing its Desires, enlightning its Understanding, and overcoming its Heart with Torrents of Delights, so far and proportionably to the Soul's free turning of her self towards him. This effectual Will of God is so universal, that it has no Exception; so impartial that all intelligent Creatures shall more or less enjoy God and his saving Operations, not by any Principle of Difference and Equality that proceeds from God's Part, but according as they have more or less extensively turn'd their Desire and their Liberty towards God, who for his part continues always to act uniformly, equally, and in Proportion, and suitably to the Disposition of the Act of his Creature, which shall certainly be by God uniformly and simply fill'd and actuated according to its utmost Extent, and to the degrees of its Fervour. In fine, this effectual Will of God is so immutable, that come what will, it will never change, which makes that excellent mystical Divine *Taulerus* say, that tho' God had sworn by himself to a Creature or a Sinner, that he would never have any Communion with him, if for all that this Sinner turn'd himself towards God, he would be forc'd notwithstanding his Oath, to come into his Soul and fill it with his Grace. For 'Tis absolutely impossible that God should disapprove or reject the Desire and Liberty that are turn'd towards him. Can God reject the Desire which a Creature has after God? This would be to dislike himself, which is the greatest Impossibility of any.

XLIX.
*Election is
 made in
 Conformity
 to this
 Rule and
 Will of
 God.*

XLIX. This Will of God is so impartial and immutable, that God's Election is guided by it. Supposing the Creatures had continu'd still in Innocence, God would not have chosen any of 'em to greater or lower Degrees of Happiness, but as they had more or less fully turn'd themselves towards him. If we suppose them fallen into Sin, and that God after by a kind of second Creation restores them to such a Condition that they

they can turn themselves to him again, he will chuse Chap. I. none to Salvation, or to higher or lower degrees of Glory, but according as they shall more or less turn towards him their Desire and their Liberty, otherwise he will leave them. In this Procedure of God there is a wonderful Impartiality, Universality, Equality, Uniformity and Simplicity, in which neither the Devil himself nor all the Cavils of Hell can find the least Shadow of Partiality, Exception or Injustice. We may see here of what vast Extent these Truths are.

L. This divine Act of the Adorable Trinity intimately united to the Soul is the *true*, real, and efficient Cause of eternal Life and Happiness, which none deserve but by the pure good Will which God had in his Son to produce Beings to make them happy thro' him and his Holy Spirit, who alone in Unity with the Father are and actually cause this Happiness which is not of any Creatures making, tho' the Creature have Power given it to be the occasional Cause of it, as I said before.

LI. Some, it may be, may here object, that seeing God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is equally and in substance the same in all the Blessed, how can it be that he should operate unequally in them; or if you please, how is it possible that the Blessed should not equally enjoy the same Operations of God! Can this be without conceiving some sort of Inequality and Diversity on God's Part? To comprehend the Solution of this Difficulty, I shall take leave to make this Supposition. Suppose we, that God who always in substance equally possesses himself, may yet at some times desire himself less ardently than at others. Were it so, it is plain that when God desir'd himself less, he would less sensibly possess himself, and would less enjoy the Contemplation, the Light and Joys of himself, and on the contrary, he would enjoy them more, and relish them more, and would appear to himself more gloriously when he desir'd himself more. Now what is impossible with respect to God (I mean as to more or less in his essential Acts) is with respect to the Creature both possible and true; the Desire of the Creature being capable of Diminution and Augmentation. And as this Desire is the Subject and Foundation upon which

L. The Act of God is the real Cause of eternal Life.

LI. Whence it is that God being the same in all the Saints, yet produces in them different Operations.

Chap. I.

which God the Father sets in the Soul his bright Word and his Holy Spirit, it is evident, that tho' God place his Word and his Spirit equally in substance upon all the Blessed Spirits, yet those whose Desire is more extensive, fervent and quick, do feel and perceive more the same Thing, the same Light, and the same delicious Touches; and that those whose Desire is less, do perceive and relish them less. Different Persons, whose Sight, Hearing, Taste, Smelling and Touch are more or less quick and large, must needs feel and perceive very differently and unequally the same Light, the same Harmony, the same Meat, the same Perfume, and the same tangible Quality. This Difference of Sensation proceeds only from the Subject feeling and perceiving, the Object is still the same without any Inequality.

LII. *God is free to give his subjective Gifts unequally, but to the Subjects of Faculties naturally equal he gives nothing unequally, but by reason of their Choice and free Acts.*

LII. Not but that if we consider God's Liberty antecedently to the Existence of things, and he having in himself infinite Realities, Properties and Combinations of Properties to represent; not but that, I say, he might have created spiritual Beings or Subjects exceedingly different in Realities, Capacities, Order, and subjective Gifts in infinite Variety. He did so when he created the Angelick Minds: This is what none doubt of; but this is besides our Question, which is not here concerning the subjective, but the objective Gifts of things.

'Tis demanded, why Spirits that have not different subjective Gifts or Capacities, are fill'd with Light and divine Joys, some more amply and livelily than others of the same Rank, or are possess'd otherwise than their ordinary Capacities seem to require; and why others are fill'd with them less extensively and vigorously than they might have been, or than others of the same Order and Capacity with themselves are? For 'tis certain there are Subjects naturally equal in their Fund, some whereof are yet enlighten'd, beatify'd and glorify'd beyond what their ordinary Size and Capacity seems to import, and that others are much less so than they might have been; not to say there are some who are not at all blest with Light and Happiness, of which their Nature was capable. 'Tis of this Diversity we ask the Reason; and to this, say, that this Inequality proceeds,

ceeds not from any Impartiality or unequal Choice on Chap. I.
 God's Part, but from the Rule, the Will, the Decree
 universal, uniform, impartial and immutable, which
 God has made to infuse himself, and to operate bright-
 ly and deliciously in Souls, in Proportion as they have
 more or less fully, more or less ardently, more or less
 constantly and fervently turn'd themselves towards him.
 Now as among many Spirits which may be suppos'd
 of equal Capacities, and of the same subjective Gifts,
 there are some, tho' very rare, that make extraordinary
 and heroical Efforts above the common Way, and
 others exert but common Acts, and such as are pro-
 portion'd to the ordinary Pitch of their Capacity, and
 that others do not so much as they might; and lastly,
 that others exert none at all, or quite contrary Acts.
 Hence it is, and not from any thing else, that God
 operates more or less brightly and deliciously, or not
 at all in these Subjects, that tho' naturally equal in Fa-
 culties and Capacities, have yet so differently and un-
 equally turn'd their Liberty towards God, and given
 Admission to him.

LIII. This is what I had to remark upon the man- LIII. The
 ner of the Divine Providence's acting with Man, or *Recapitu-*
 generally with all intelligent Beings, in order to save *lation of*
 them; by giving them all without exception a free and *the Con-*
 active Being or Nature endow'd with Faculties and *duct of*
 Powers of Desire, Intellect and Love, with a Capa- *divine Pro-*
 city to admit the infinite Light and Good, whereof *vidence*
 they could not be the true Causes (as they are of the *before the*
 Acts of their own Faculties) but only the occasional *Fall, to*
 Causes, by freely turning the Acts of their Faculties to- *attain its*
 wards God, who presents to them in a preventing, con- *End, the*
 stant, general, simple, and individual manner, the Light *Salvation*
 of his Word, and the Joys of his Holy Spirit, (to say *of intelli-*
 nothing of the external Means of Light and accessory *gent Beings*
 Delights) being pleas'd neither to limit, determine, or
 determinately to foresee their Liberty; the Conduct
 whereof he has establish'd, the occasional and admissive
 Cause of his luminous and beatifying Grace, and which
 he has immutably, universally and impartially resolv'd
 to introduce, unite and make efficaciously to operate so
 far and in Proportion as the Soul shall freely turn her
 self

Chap. I. self towards it, which is God himself the only and true Cause of the Salvation and Happiness of the Soul.

LIV. *The Truth of this System and the Falseness of all other.*

LIV. I believe the most cavilling and unjust Devils can have nothing to say against so wonderful a Conduct of a most good and wise God, who designing to have happy Creatures, has so wonderfully well by his Providence furnish'd 'em with all things necessary to this End. All the Systems differing from this that have been invented upon this Subject, shew plainly their Falsity, by the Abysses of Difficulties, Absurdities and Falsities, into which they cast those that follow the natural and necessary Consequences of them. But that of Truth is so easie and so clear, that it leaves no considerable Difficulties in the Minds of those that comprehend it thoroughly. I think there neither are nor really can be any. At least with all the Skill that I have to find out and foresee them, I can think of none the Solutions whereof are not to be met with in the foregoing Treatises.

LV. *The Obscurity and Difficulty of the Ways of God ought not to be a Prejudice against their Clearness and Easiness.*

LV. I am not ignorant that some take Clearness and Easiness in this Point, for a certain Sign that we have not hit on the right Ways of God; and on the contrary, that they take Darkness and even Absurdity it self for a sure Sign that we are in the Ways of the Lord under Covert of this Exclamation of St. Paul, *How incomprehensible are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out* (a)! But besides that, this Passage of St. Paul relates to things of the Divine Oeconomy after the Fall, and not to that before, the Sense of the Apostle is not nor can be, that the Judgments and Ways of God are incomprehensible and obscure, when the time is come that God is pleas'd to manifest them, and gives his Light and Holy Spirit to enable Men to understand them; for then on the contrary they are Clearness, Easiness and Streightness it self. *The Ways of the Lord are right, and the Just walk therein*, says the Prophet (b). *The spiritual Man discerneth all things and judgeth all things, and the Holy Spirit which he hath received searcheth the deep things of God* (c). But when the time is not yet come to understand certain Mysteries, certain Ways of God, certain Promises and Predictions which God makes long before they come to pass, such as were the Rejection of the Jews, the Conversion of the Gentiles, and

(a) Rom. 11. 33.

(b) Hof. 14. 9.

(c) 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15.

and then the Restoration of the *Jews*, and the Excision of *Chap. I.*
the Christian Nations; in this Case all the Industry of Man cannot comprehend them; and such things are indeed unintelligible, and past finding out by human Understanding and all its Powers; as are still the Prophecies of *Daniel*, and the Revelations of *St. John*, which yet will be Light and Easiness it self, when the time for them to be understood is come; God will then give the Spirit of Understanding in these Matters to whomsoever he pleases. Let us not therefore any longer abuse this Passage of *St. Paul* to the Prejudice of the Easiness of God's Lights, and to cover the Absurdities and Chimeras of human Understanding.

We must observe that this so clear and easie System that I have given will be always the same in Substance, both at and after the Fall, excepting that upon Occasion of the Accident of Sin, which aims to hinder its Execution, God will superadd means to remove this accessory Obstacle, and to carry on the same Designs by the substantial Part of these Ways, and of this very System, which shall at last be ratify'd and accomplish'd.

We are now come to the second Consideration we promis'd to make upon the *Providence* of God, which is its Conduct in the Design God had to save his Creatures even while the first Sin was a committing.

CHAP. II.

Of the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man when he was about to sin.

I.  SHOULD soon have ended this *I. The De-*
Chapter if I confin'd my self within *sign of this*
the Limits of the Title of it, and treated *Chapter.*
only of what God's Providence has done
to save intelligent Creatures, and particularly Man, when Sin was just about to be committed, and when it actually was a committing until its full Completion. This is what I think I have particularly and largely enough treated of in most part of the *Oeco-*

Chap. II. *nomy of Sin*, both to demonstrate the Truth, and to give the Solution of what Difficulties may occur in that Matter. Yet there is one that I will touch again here, and verifie the Truth of this Chapter by the Parallel of God's Conduct afterward under the Oeconomy after Sin, which I shall only prove in general, and that to some sort of Readers only.

II. (1.) *At the Fall God on his Part neither retracted nor chang'd any thing.* **II.** To see how God's Providence has done all that belong'd to it to do to save his intelligent Creatures, (and particularly Man, who is our principal Subject) when they were falling into a Tendency to sin, and to separate themselves from that Blessedness for which God made them, and had so admirably, charitably and universally provided them all those things we have been treating of in the preceding Chapter, we need but observe, (1.) That all those things continued still the same, and that there was no Alteration of any of them on God's Part. (2.) And that God had done all as to his preventing Graces and particular Acts and Gifts that could then be done; so that if it so fell out that his Creature did not attain the Bliss and Happiness for which he had design'd him, it came so to pass purely by the Fault and voluntary Change of this Creature, which, contrary to the Design and Will of God, would make it self miserable without God's being able to hinder it by his Omnipotence. For first,

III. At the Fall God neither withdrew from Man his subjective nor objective Gifts, but Man rejected them.

III. It is certain, that when Sin was a committing, or as I may say, a forming and fashioning, that all that Man had receiv'd subjectively from God still continu'd in him, Being, Faculties, Liberty, Activity and the rest. And it is also certain, that God on his Part furnish'd Man constantly and liberally the Object of his Light and of his Love; and that the Creature's Misery did not commence thro' any Act of Retraction or Revocation which God made of his objective Gifts, *for the Gifts of God are unchangeable and without Repentance* (a). He does not retract any of them, *All are in him Yea and Amen* (b); not Yea and Nay.

(a) Rom. II. 29.

(b) 2 Cor. 1. 20.

And this is so highly and exceedingly true, that even after the Commission and Consummation of Sin, God does not, properly speaking, withdraw from the Sinner his Light and his Love by way of any Act of Privation on his Side, as if he depriv'd a Subject of them

them that were capable of receiving them. It is not Chap. II.
 so; 'tis the Subject that drives God from it self, and if
 after its having driven him away, it were yet capable
 to receive him, God would re enter it still; but as it
 ceases to be a Subject capable of God, God no longer
 offers or presents himself to it. For to what purpose
 should he, or rather, how is it possible for an Object to
 offer it self to what, as to such Object, is a meer no-
 thing? Not but that the Sinner after his being hardned
 has always Faculties naturally capable of God; but
 their Capacity is then very remote from him; Sinners
 are no longer nearly capable of that God. The near
 and proximate Subject of the Divine Object is the De-
 sire and the Liberty. But they have no more any free
 Desire towards God; and tho' God should be pleas'd
 still transiently to move their Desire, yet would their
 Liberty carry them away from him; which is no more
 than has already happen'd. For in truth, 'tis the Sin-
 ner alone that instead of occasioning in himself the
 unitive Presence of Good by freely turning towards it
 his Desire, would freely change this Inclination of his
 Desire into an Inclination towards other things; so that
 God being oblig'd (according to his immutable Rule
 and impartial Decree) not to enter and operate brightly
 and deliciously in the Soul, but so far and in Propor-
 tion to the Soul's Admission of him by freely turning
 her self towards him, it must needs be that when the
 Soul is fully bent to turn her self constantly from him,
 that God no more shine or operate in her for her Hap-
 piness, and that so she become miserable without the
 Divine Providence's contributing any thing towards it
 but its charitable Conduct to save her.

IV. Secondly, I say, God has prevented Man by all
 Ways possible to his Omnipotence to hinder his Fall
 and his Misery, and afterwards to lead him to Blessed-
 ness.

This is prov'd three or four Ways. The First is this,
 from the particular Consideration of what God did for
 Man when Sin first happen'd, as the Scripture shews
 us. This is what I have handled elsewhere (a), whi-

IV. God
 has done
 all that
 was possible
 to hinder
 Man's Fall.
 Four Ways
 to prove
 this Truth;
 the 1st.

D 3

2d. and 3d. (a) Oecon. of Sin, Chap. 11. and 12.

Chap. II. ther I refer the Reader to avoid Repetition. The *Second* Way to prove the Truth in Question is from right Reason, to which it would be flatly contrary to affirm, that God drew Creatures out of nothing by his Omnipotence on purpose to make them happy, and then that this same Omnipotence forsook them, and would not exert it self to secure them from Misery. This Procedure is irrational and self-contradictory. For we thereby suppose that God makes a thing for an End, and then that his Omnipotence neither acts nor does any thing for obtaining this End. Why should it thus contradict it self? The *Third* Way to prove the same Truth is, another Contradiction we should find in God as acting without (a), when we look on what he has done after Man's Sin. For after Man's Sin God has us'd all his Endeavours to restore him, and for this End has undergone a thousand painful Labours. But to what Purpose is all this, if he could have prevented his Fall? Why did he not spare all these infinite Pains whereof he so often complains? Where is the Wisdom of this! of meer Pleasure to let a thing fall, to raise it again with so much Difficulty! I think I have touch'd this Reason in another Place (b).

(a) Ad
extra.

(b) Oecon
of Sin.
Chap. 3.

*Sin was
not abso-
lutely ne-
cessary to
the Mani-
festation of
the sub-
stantial
part of
God's Ju-
stice and
Mercy.*

(c) Vide
infra.
Chap. 13.

And let none say, God did this that he might afterwards shew his Justice and his Mercy. The substantial Part of God's Justice might have been manifested without the Event of Sin, seeing it consists in rendering to every one according to his Works and Choice; nor is it any Matter to his Justice whether this Choice tend toward Good or Ill. So likewise the Substance of his Mercy, which is Grace, might have been shewn tho' there had been no Sin, the accessory Event of which has been the Occasion of a (c) Change only in the Denominations of Justice and Grace into those of *avenging Justice and Pity*, which are Denominations or Relations accessory only to what is substantial in Justice and Grace. It will be said that Mercy essentially supposes Misery: I grant it does; but then there are two sorts of Miseries; one is natural, by which the Soul being naturally void of Light and Good, and at the same time exceedingly quick and sensible, would be in a hellish State of Misery, if the Object of bright and delicious Grace did not mercifully present it self to her; which

which I have largely insisted on in the *Oeconomy of the Creation* (a). The other Misery supposes Sin. But it was not necessary God's Mercy should be this Way declar'd. It might have been sufficiently manifested the other way for God's accessory Glory, who needing not the Creatures for his essential Glory, much less needed be the Misery of their Sins. I may chance to handle this Difficulty more particularly somewhere else (b).

Chap. II.
(a) Chap. 14. § 8, 9, 10. and Chap. 15. § 8, 9, 10.
(b) Chap. 13. § 3.

Lastly, a *Fourth* Way to prove that God has made use of his Omnipotence to prevent and hinder Man's Misery, is taken from the Consideration of what he has done in the *Oeconomy of his Restoration*. I suppose none will dispute this Consequence with me, that if God after Man's Fall displays his Omnipotence to restore him, tho' most of those whom he thus wills to restore do eventually perish, he might likewise before the Fall have done all he could to hinder his falling into Misery, tho' Man actually did fall into it. For supposing the first, the latter has no Difficulty at all in it, and indeed there is an exact Parallel between them. Now, that God has done all he could after Man's Fall to save him, tho' Man perish again, 'tis what God himself assures us not only when he often represents to us all the Marvels which he has done, and the Exploits of his great Power, of his Arm and stretch'd out Hand to save Men, of the Riches of his Goodness towards them (which should rather have been call'd Niggardliness than Riches, had he spar'd to give them any thing that still was necessary and efficacious, and in his Power to give) but what's more, he says it in express and formal Terms, and calls Man to be Witness of it. *Ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem and Men of Juda, judge, I pray you, between me and my Vineyard: What could have been done more for my Vineyard, that I have not done* (b)? It will, it may be, be said, that this Vineyard does not signify all Men. But that does not rouch our present Question; 'tis enough here to prove that a Man may perish, tho' God has done all he could to hinder it. And this is what God evidently protests here with relation to the *Jews*. This Passage is so clear that it will excuse me from alledging others, which Men may more easily cavil about than they commonly do about this.

The fourth Way to prove the Truth in Question, from the Actions and Words of God.

(b) *Isai. 5.*
3, 4

V. *The Difficulty that human Reason meets with in this Point, and which hinders Men from believing God himself.*

(a) Oecon. of Sin. Chap. 6. § 6, 7, &c.

VI. *Where in the Power of God consists; that it extends not to contradictory things or Acts.*

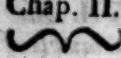
V. I intend not here to relate all the forc'd Interpretations that are us'd by Men to enervate this Passage of Scripture, because Men would not make 'em, were they not as it were constrain'd to it by this Reasoning, viz. If God had done all he could to hinder Man's Fall, or if he still did all he could to raise him from his Misery and to save him, and yet Man fell, and still after all perishes, it would follow that God were not omnipotent, or that his Power were limited and weak. This is that stumbling Stock Men are commonly unable to avoid, and because of which they put a violent and false Sense upon the Divine Scriptures, which they would not do, did they not split upon this Rock of Offence. For this Reason we must try wholly to remove it. But have I not already done it (a) else-where. Nevertheless, I will here say a Word or two more upon that Head; for we cannot labour too much in removing such mighty Difficulties, which also continually present themselves to our Imagination as utterly insuperable.

VI. The Power of God consists in this, that having freely produc'd the Ideas and Natures of things in his Conception, he may produce them really out of himself when he pleases, and act upon them as he pleases. But it consists not in this, that he may destroy the Nature of things, much less that he destroy the Nature and Relations of things, while 'tis in the mean time suppos'd that the Nature of things and their Ideas still remain the same. Certainly this could never be done, tho' God himself should employ his Omnipotence all possible Ways. Hence we plainly see there are some things that cannot be done, tho' God be omnipotent, and however he use his Omnipotence. Why therefore should it be thought strange to say, that tho' God has done, and yet does all that he can, yet he cannot hinder Man from falling and perishing? For this is but the Application of a particular Case to a general Rule, which is granted to be true. But before we apply this to spiritual things, let us apply it to material.

VII. In

VII. In material things it is certain that the Object VII. *An*
of God's Power is not the Destruction of the Nature of *Example of*
a thing or of the Property of it, supposing all the while *this in*
that this thing or Property still subsists and remains: *corporeal*
For Example, the Nature of a Circle consists in this, *Beings.*
that all the Lines drawn from the Center to the Cir-
cumference be equal. This being granted, and sup-
posing the Nature of the Circle to subsist and remain,
it is certain God's Power may dispose of this Circle a
thousand Ways by making some of infinite Variety as
to Greatness, Situation and Matter, by making some
to rest, and others move according to the infinite De-
grees of Motion. In a Word, the Power of God can
never be exhausted in the Production of innumerable
Varieties and Effects upon this Circle. But to make
it square, supposing it to continue still a Circle, is not
the Object of Divine Power. 'Tis not to this that it
extends, and so it may be truly said, that God cannot
do this; and that notwithstanding all the Effects of his
Omnipotence, the Circle will continue to have its Se-
midiameters equal. For otherwise God would do and
undo at the same time; he would make and preserve
a certain Nature, and yet would unmake and destroy
it, which would be a Contradiction and Weakness in
God, thus to be able in Consent and Effect to disap-
prove and disjoin himself from his Consent and Effect,
or to be able to disjoin himself from himself, as suppos'd
willing and making things without himself. This is
impossible.

VIII. In like manner in things spiritual, God has in VIII. *The*
his Conception produc'd ideally, and out of it in effect *Applica-*
and really, Beings whose Nature, or if you will natural *tion of this*
Property it is to be free, that is, to determine for *to spiritual*
themselves their Faculties to certain Objects, and to *things. The*
consent of themselves, I do not say, that the Objects *Power of*
should simply present themselves to them, or simply act *God cannot*
upon them in an objective manner, but that they *supply the*
should enter intimately into them, and act upon them *determina-*
in an unitive and transformative manner. This being *tive Act*
so, and supposing (as all agree) that the Nature of these *of our Li-*
Beings still subsists and remains, it is evident, that the *berry.*
Power of God may easily dispose of them, and act up-
on them Millions of different Ways: For he may give
them

Chap. II.  them more or fewer Objects, and diversifie these Objects infinite Ways, and so act upon the Sensibilities and Perception of the Soul objectively, and raise in it various Ideas, Sensations, Delectations, Fervours and Desires, but objectively and transiently only. But to make the Soul determine her Faculties to the intimate Admission of these Objects, or to make her consent that these Objects should intimately enter into her, and there act upon her in an unitive Way, this is no more the Object of divine Power than it is to make a Circle, while, 'tis such, a Square. God has not been pleas'd to extend his Power so far, nor can he will so to do, or do so without willing the Destruction and actually destroying the Nature of such intelligent and free Beings. As therefore it may truly be said, that whatever God may do with a Circle, yet it can never have unequal *Radius's* ; so likewise one may truly say, that whatever God may do with an intelligent and free Being, yet if this free Being will turn away its Faculties from God, and will not consent that he should operate unitively and habitually in it, God cannot make this Will to change upon this Score, that God can will it in the first Place. This shall never be done, nor ever can be done. God will indeed present to his Creature his Light, his Calls, his Sensations and Delectations, and in a Word, whatever he pleases ; but the Being that is created intelligent and free, must on its own Stock begin to admit them intimately, freely and unitively, and to desire them actively. God will never supply that Defect, neither indeed can he ; not for want of Power, but because this is not the Object of his Power. The Power of God lies not in destroying an immortal and everlasting Nature, nor in destroying it while it is suppos'd to subsist. This would be, under pretence of God's Power, and for fear of limiting it, to establish all sorts of Chimera's and Contradictions, as well in respect of God, as of the Creatures. For this way God would have constituted and made for ever a Creature to which he would have given, as a natural and subjective Property, the Power to determine it self, and yet it would be he that would himself determine it otherwise than this Creature did, or was about, or would have determin'd. And thus the

the Determination would have been made by this Creature (by Supposition) and yet would have been made by some other than this Creature; that is to say, it would be made by it, and would not be made by it; which is a Contradiction.

IX. And consequently, to return to our Conclusion, IX. *The Power of God could not hinder but Man might undo himself. The gentle and infallible Determination of the Liberty a Contradiction.* God could do, and truly did by his Divine Providence all that could be done to hinder Man from being miserable, and to make him eternally happy; tho' Man still had Power not to correspond with God's gracious Purpose, and to make himself miserable as it really came to pass, without any Impeachment of, and notwithstanding God's Omnipotence; as in like manner it still happens, that God does all he can to convert and save Men, and yet Men are not converted and sav'd. Not that God cannot convert and save them. He can do it; but the Object of this Power is only the free Will that will freely surrender it self and give its Consent; except in this Case a forc'd Conversion is not the Object of God's Power, and a forc'd and constrain'd Conversion is a meer Chimera and a Contradiction; that is to say, a Conversion-Aversion; or a Conversion not Conversion. None but the Devil, or the ridiculous Mind of Man can will such extravagant Absurdities.

To say, *That God does so gently determine and bend the Liberty, that it then consents without Force and infallibly,* is pitiful Nonsense that only covers two or three Contradictions: For 'tis as much as to say, *that God gently destroys the Liberty, and that upon this Destruction of it here follows its Restoration.* The Destruction of Liberty is contrary to the Supposition. *Gentle Destruction* is a formal Contradiction, all Destruction being formally violent. *Destruction the Fountain of Restoration*, another Contradiction this, nothing the Cause of Reality, or nothing not nothing.

X. I should not have enlarg'd so much upon this point, were it not that lately chancing to look on a book written by one of the great Genius's of this Age, I light upon that Place where he examines what his *To say that God has done all he could to save those that are not sav'd,* no Blasphemy, as the contrary Doctrine is. (a) Mr. Arnaud against Mallet.

Chap. II.

Chap. II. his Adversary had said. " That *Jesus Christ* had done
 " all he could to save *Judas*, and if this Wretch was
 " lost, it was not because *Jesus* did not do all he could
 " to hinder it. This makes him fly out into a mighty
 Passion, and to brand this Doctrine as Blasphemy. In
 truth, things have strangely chang'd their Names! I
 for my Part, were I to call any thing Blasphemy, would
 call the Doctrine opposite to this so. How! dare Men
 teach that it was *Jesus's* Business to save *Judas* and all
 those that perish, and that it was to be done by him
 alone, that he could do it, and that if he had will'd so
 to do, as 'tis suppos'd he might have will'd it, the thing
 had been done, and yet that he meerly because it was
 his Fancy (no doubt to take Pleasure in and to glorifie
 himself and his Father in the Possession and Spectacle
 of the Damn'd, and to present this rare Show to the
 Court of Heaven) would not will to save them! O
 cruel and blasphemous Doctrine! and such as cuts my
 Heart with a most sensible Sorrow! How great are
 Mens Darkness and Ignorance to think to honour God
 by so cruelly dishonouring him! O my God! those
 that have such Sentiments as these, are not yet acquaint-
 ed with, nor sensible of, the Greatness of thy Good-
 ness nor of thy Love! For we our selves, as bad as we
 are, tho' we had an absolute Right over our Children,
 nor were responsible to God or Man, yet would not
 we let them grow vicious and wicked; no more than
 we would let them fall into the Hands of the Executi-
 oners and Tormentors to entertain the World with so
 bloody a Spectacle, if it lay in our Power to help it.
 And could God do thus towards his Creatures, and on-
 ly because he would spare to exert his Power (suppo-
 sing this a fit Object of it) and yet speak to them of his
 infinite Goodness, protest to them that he wills not
 their Death, and make his Complaints to them that he
 has undertaken and suffer'd all that could be imagin'd
 for them, that he has almost torn himself to pieces
 (as I may say) to save them, and that yet they will
 not comply nor make any Returns to all his Pains and
 his Love. Would not this Procedure of God be more
 truly Avarice, Deceit, Cruelty and Lying? Thus
 strangely have Men glorify'd and adorn'd God by the
 Conceits of their corrupt Reason!

XI. As I write impartially for all sorts of Men, and that among those that shall read this Book there may chance to be some *Roman* Catholicks, and such as are of the *Fansenists* Opinion, I intend to prove to them *ad hominem*, and by such Ways as to them are sacred, the Truth in question, *viz.* that God has done what he possibly could to hinder Men even after the Fall, without excepting *Judas* himself, from falling into eternal Perdition. This as we see, and as I have already noted, more directly appertains to what I shall say hereafter concerning the Divine Providence after the Fall of Man; but may be also apply'd to what concerns the Event of the first Fall and first Sin: for as to the thing it self it is ideally as true and as possible in one Case as the other; and as to God, the Infinity of his Love, the Uniformity and Plenitude of his way of Acting will not let us question this Conformity.

XI. *Those of the Church of Rome ought not to doubt of this Truth if they will but follow their own Principles.*

XII. The Persons I have respect to at present, do not question but in all Ages of the Church there were some Holy Persons illuminated of God, and that their Writings contain Lights truly Divine. But yet there is a great difference between 'em, which is not sufficiently consider'd. *First*, there are those that we call the Fathers, (especially of the later Ages) who were generally Great, Learned and Eminent Persons that made themselves Famous by the great and numerous Volumes they writ on all Subjects of Piety and Controversy. These take most with the Learned of our Age, because of their Knowledge and Authority that suits best with the Spirit of Vanity and human Learning of the Age. Therefore 'tis that they are so much studied, and quoted, and indeed made the Rule of what Men are to believe and do. It can't be deny'd but these had great Lights and great Vertues. But the Truth on't is, their Human Learning, and the Activity of their Reason, the Heat of Dispute, their Dignities and Authority in the Church, have made 'em mix with the Light of God and the Motions of his Holy Spirit, some false Lights and some Motions and Passions of corrupt Nature, which hinder'd them from clearly discerning the Rays of Divine Light in its entire and naked Purity.

XII. *Three sorts of Writers that are of Authority among the Roman-Catholicks. Which are the best.*

There

Chap. II. There are others (in the *second Place*) who, altho' Learned have been much more pure and calm, and that us'd their Learning only as a help to write (rather from a Principle of an honest Intention to teach others, than from a pure Motion of God) the Divine Lights they had acquir'd of God by a Faith and Love still mixt with the Activity of Reason, which, tho' mortify'd, was not yet wholly dead. Such were some of the Mystick Divines, who yet are beyond many of the Fathers.

But there were some, who, either being Learned, and having entirely and purely submitted their Understanding to God; or being Ignorant and unlearn'd, and having entirely resign'd themselves and their Affections to him, have receiv'd from him so great and so pure Lights, that nothing after the Holy Scripture, is comparable to their Writings, neither Fathers, nor Doctors, nor any thing else. Such are the greatest part of the Mystical Divines, and a great many Saints, and Holy illiterate Persons, where this is remarkable; that commonly, the more simple and unlearn'd they were, the more strong, pure, and shining were their Lights: not only because they were then out of all Danger of mingling any thing of the cloudy Activity of human Reason with them, but likewise because their Heart was more humble and simple, which is the fittest Disposition to partake of God's most singular Graces. I might give many Examples of this, but I will content my self with one only, and it shall be that of an illiterate Woman, an Instance of the most simple and lowest Kind imaginable; and yet I scarce believe that since the Apostles to this last Age wherein this Blessed Saint liv'd, I mean St. Catharine of Genoa, there ever was or could be any thing more Divine, more solid and sublime than her admirable Works. I am still amaz'd that those who have canoniz'd her and take her for a Saint, do not labour to inform themselves of the Truth and Will of God from such Divine Writings, which are the pure Lights of the Holy Spirit, rather than from a hundred either Fathers or Doctors, all whose prodigiously Voluminous Writings are not comparable to the twenty or thirty Sheets of which the Works of this divinely inspir'd and wonderfully bright Soul consist.

list. But after all, whatever comparative Esteem they Chap. II.
may be in, as those I am at present treating with have
Veneration enough for her Person and Doctrine not to
accuse 'em either of Impiety or Blasphemy, I will pro-
duce out of 'em some Testimonies that serve my pre-
sent Purpose.

XIII. I shall give you some Passages out of her Life. XIII. The

"(a) God does not suffer those Souls to fall, that with
their Free will do not consent to Sin, and he does let
such fall as voluntarily consent to it: because having
given us a Free will, he will not force nor constrain
it. He therefore that falls into Sin, must take the
whole blame to himself; because he alone is the
Cause of it, and not God, who is always ready to
assist us even after our Fall, provided the Soul that
has fallen will suffer it self to be assisted by corre-
sponding and co-operating with the Divine Grace,
which continually calls and invites it to rise again out
of Sin.

The Doctrine of a Saint that teaches God did all he possibly cou'd to save those that perish.

(a) Life of S. Cath. of Genoa, Chap. XI.

"(b) God does not leave knocking at the Heart of
Man to enter and make good his Operations in it,
nor can any complain that God has not continually
knock'd and beat at the Door of his Heart: because
without accepting of Persons he comes to all, and
calls and draws us all to him, no more respecting
the good than the bad. (c) God created Man for
eternal Happiness with a Love unconceivably great.
He gives him all the Means conducing to so noble an
End with infinite Charity, Purity and Rectitude;
so that he suffers him not to want any thing, and e-
ven after the Commission of never so heinous Crimes,
he never fails to send him all necessary Inspirations,
Warnings, and Punishments, to bring him to that
State of Blessedness for which he made him with so
ardent a Love: So that when Man shall after Death
know all this, and shall see how he constantly refus'd
to be led by the Divine Goodness, and that it was
wholly owing to himself alone that he was not Hap-
py, he will suffer much more from the Sorrow and
Vexation of his having oppos'd the Divine Goodness
than from all the other Torments of Hell.

(b) Ibid. Ch. XIII.

(c) Ibid. Ch. XV.

"(a)

(a) Ibid. Ch. XX. “ (a) When I observe with how great readiness God provides us all things necessary as well outward as inward for our Salvation, and that he takes so great care of our Affairs; and when on the contrary I see Man so busie about things not only useless but hurtful, and that at his Death God will say to him, *What could I have done for thee, O Man! that I have not done*: and he shall clearly see the Graces he has despis’d, and for which he shall be call’d to a severer Account than for all his other Sins: I am amaz’d, nor can I imagine or comprehend how Man can be so insensible as not to think on a thing of such mighty Importance.

(b) Ibid. Chap. XXXIV. “ (b) Almighty God gives to All such Light and such Grace, that every one if he do but what is in his Power, may be saved if he will but give his Consent. O Free-will! thou art the Cause of great Good and great Evil! If thou but deny thy self for the Love of God, thou shalt quickly arrive at such a State of Freedom as thou shalt never fall from, and and shalt know that to serve God is truly to reign.

(c) Ibid. Chap. XL. “ (c) Our Lord has said, *None can come to me except my Father draw him*; nor is God’s gracious Providence ever wanting to draw Men, saying, *I stand at the Door and knock*. But our Wickedness is so great, that shou’d God regard it, it wou’d be our highest Misery, for then he could never mind us nor do us any good; but he considers only his own infinite Mercy and Goodness, by which he endeavours to bring us to that happy End for which he made us. To effect this, he out of his mere Love produces in us all necessary Operations, thro’ which if we make good use of ’em, our Affairs shall go on successfully; if we do not, we shall be miserable at our Death, hearing from *Jesus* this Word, *O thou wicked Servant, what could I have done more for thee than I have done?* So that Man, tho’ never so malicious, shall not be able to find any Excuse: for thro’ God’s Assistance, who is always ready to help him, he may forsake his Wickedness: and say, *Thou, Lord, hast broken my Bonds in sunder, and I will offer Thee a Sacrifice of Praise*. I will also give some Passages out of her Dialogues. “ (d)

(d) Dial. I. Chap. V. “ The Soul saw a kind Ray of Love issuing from this Divine

" Divine Fountain, and darted towards Man as if it Chap. II.
 " wou'd utterly destroy him; and when it found an
 " Impediment, if it were possible for God to suffer Pain,
 " this Opposition it met with wou'd put him to the
 " greatest possible. This Ray seem'd to have no other
 " Business but to pierce the Soul, and that if the Soul
 " was not penetrated with it, it was only thro' her own
 " Fault. For she perceiv'd this Ray encompassing her
 " on all sides to find Entrance, but the Soul blinded
 " with Self-love regarded it not: And when God sees
 " that a Soul damns it self, and that the Ray of his
 " Love cannot make Impression strong enough to enter
 " the Heart thro' its Obstinaey, he seems to say, *The*
 " *Love which I bear to this Soul is so great, that I should*
 " *be glad never to forsake it. O ingrateful and harden'd*
 " *Soul! as to what depends on my Will, I can never be*
 " *willing thou shouldst be damn'd, so great a Love do I bear*
 " *thee; and were it possible for me to suffer for thee and*
 " *so to hinder it, I would do it; but it being impossible for*
 " *my pure Love, to abide with the least Imperfection, I am*
 " *forc'd to leave thee: and as thro' me thou mightest have*
 " *been capable of all Happiness by thy Union with me, so*
 " *now being left of me thou hast made thy self susceptible of*
 " *all kind of Evil.* *Exil'd his spirit ylluminatd, sordid yd.*
 " (a) O the wonderful Work of this pure Love that (a) Dial. 2.
 " God gives to Man, to enable him to Work as far as Chap. V.
 " is necessary to come to that Perfection for which he
 " made him! He still affords him all necessary Grace
 " and Light, and does by Degrees increase it in such
 " Manner and Measure, that he never has more or less
 " than he should have: for had he less than he needed,
 " he might make a good Excuse for not co-operating
 " or working as he should, because he had not Grace
 " enough; and should he have too much, he would be
 " punish'd for failing to work.——But because we are
 " cold and slothful in working, and because our Mind
 " and Instinct pushes us on to a hasty Attainment of
 " Perfection, we think *Grace fails us*, and does not an-
 " swer our Desires. Yet it is not so; on the contrary,
 " 'tis thro' our Fault alone that we do not co-operate
 " with the Grace that is present to us, and this is the
 " Reason it is not increas'd. O wretched Man! how
 " can't thou ever excuse thy self after such great Care
 " and

Chap. II. " and such great Love wherewith God has provided;
 " and still incessantly does provide for thy Needs!
 " Thou wilt see and know it better at the Hour of
 " thy Death: but then thou wilt stand amaz'd and
 " dumb, and being fully convinc'd of this Truth, thou
 " wilt have nothing to say for thy self, and wilt be
 " terribly confounded for not having willingly wrought
 " with such mighty Assistance, such abundant Grace,
 " such boundless Love and Care which thy Lord had
 " of thee.

(a) Dial. 3. " (a) O Soul (tis God speaks) know that I am the
 Chap. I. " immutable God, and that before I created Man I
 " lov'd him with an *infinite Love*, with a pure, sim-
 " ple, and causeless Love; and that I cannot but love
 " what I made and predestinated to my Glory, every
 " one in their Degree. I have likewise plentifully fur-
 " nish'd him with Means proper to the Attainment of
 " his End, both with natural Gifts and *supernatural*
 " *Graces*, which shall never fail on my part; on the con-
 " trary, I do encompass and beset him with my *infinite*
 " *Love* by divers Ways and Means to reduce him un-
 " der my Guidance; and I find nothing that resists me
 " but the Free-will which I gave him, against which I do
 " by Love continually strive till he at last gives it up
 " and presents it to me; and when I have receiv'd and
 " accepted it, I by little and little strengthen it by se-
 " cret Operations and by a loving Care; nor do I ever
 " leave it till I have brought it to its design'd End.

These are some Shreds of the Divine Doctrine of this Holy Soul, as well upon the Universality of Grace as upon the Extent of God's Power and Providence in doing all it could to hinder Souls from perishing, and to lead 'em to eternal Happiness. They who have a mind to see the same things in Substance apply'd to *Judas*, need but read the sixth Meditation upon the inward Grievs of *Jesus Christ*, join'd to the *spiritual Combat*, which I am sure, they, for whose Sake I have made this Digression, will not suspect either of Blasphemy or Error.

And 'tis strange to me to see Men go to exclude *Judas* from all share in God's Care and saving Providence upon this Reason, because it is said, *none of Christ's Disciples were lost except the Son of Perdition*, that

(b) Jo. 17. the Scripture might be fulfilled (b): For, not to say that this

this Clause, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, may better be referr'd to the foregoing Words, of those which thou gavest me have I lost none (a), than to that exceptive Clause, *save only the Son of Perdition*: but suppose it referr'd as they would have it, what says the Scripture concerning this in that Psalm relating to Judas (b)? It says, that he lov'd him; that he pray'd for him, did him good, and took him for his Friend (c): but that this wicked Wretch rather lov'd Cursing than Blessing, and therefore it should be far from him. Therefore he was the Son of the Curse, only because he would not correspond with God's Designs and Care which he took to make him a Son of Benediction. Besides, we are not to fancy that this Psalm points determinately at the Person of Judas as Judas; but it is there said in general, that the Devil sought out for an Instrument to betray Jesus Christ, and that he should not fail to find one. The Person of Judas was undetermin'd to this Fact, and it was himself that freely made himself the Object of this Prediction. But enough of this Digression.

Come we now to the third Consideration (d) we intended to make upon the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man after his Fall, and after God's Design to recover him out of it. In this Point are center'd almost all the greatest and chiefest Difficulties in Divinity. But I may venture to say, that excepting two or three that I have not yet fully clear'd, there are few but may be easily solv'd by what I have said in this and the preceding Tracts. Yet, I intend upon occasion of what Difficulties may yet remain, to propose from the very Foundation the whole System of Divine Providence after Man's Fall, which I will begin to do in the next Chapter.

C H A P. III.

Of the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man after his Fall. What Remedies it offers and opposes to the Indispositions into which he is fallen. The occasional Cause of Grace. The Decree of Election.

I Things to be consider'd.

(a) Above Chap. i. n. 5.

II. One thing to be suppos'd, and five other to be consider'd afterwards.

III. (1.) The Subject of Happiness, its Faculties and its Liberty remain still after the Fall.



O give some Order to this important Matter of the Providence of God towards Man after his Fall, I will consider it with regard to the (a) five things which I have touch'd in speaking of the same Divine Providence before the Fall.

II. We suppose that after Man's Fall God resumes or still continues his Design of communicating himself to Man, and of making him Partaker of his own infinite Blessedness. Upon this, let us see what Divine Providence has done, as well in general as in particular, with relation to these five things which this Design of God either supposes or includes. (1.) The Subject of this Blessedness. (2.) The Inability of the Subject to cause it. (3.) God's Tender of it, and of the Means to attain it. (4.) The Admission, or the occasional Cause of the Admission of this Tender in the Creature. (5.) and lastly, the Action of God in the Subject that has admitted his Offers.

III. (1.) As the Soul is immortal, and even the Body too, as it is the Work of God, and likewise Nature and all the chief Faculties of things; so also the Subject which God destin'd to Happiness, and which he made of a Nature capable to receive in it as well the eternal Happiness of Light and Joy purely divine, as the accessory one of material Beauties and Delights; this Subject. I say, which is Man, always subsists and continues after its Fall. He lost not that natural and subjective Capacity which he had for Happiness, tho' he did lose (as I shall shew presently) the proximate Dispositions and Finesses for it. He has still the Faculties of Understanding, Will and Liberty; of producing

ducing his like, of disposing of his own Acts, &c. Chap. III. which Faculties he could not lose without ceasing to be what he subjectively and essentially is. His very Body, tho' encompass'd and cover'd with Corruption, yet does not eternally perish. In a Word, all that was given Man as part of his Nature, cannot, what'ere he do, be taken from him either by God or himself: For his Liberty extends not to the giving or forming his own Nature, nor by Consequence to the taking it away, or the giving himself another: neither can they be taken from him by God, he having given them to him as an absolute and irrevocable Gift. We must not therefore imagine that God took away from Man after his Sin the Liberty of his natural Acts, to exert or apply them as he pleas'd; that he has determin'd that Man shall produce such and such a Desire, that he shall manage himself so or so, much less that he shall beget just such a Number of Individuals his like, and such and such Persons in such and such Circumstances of Time and Place. Things do not go thus. Man is still free in relation to these things, tho' hereafter we shall take notice of some special Cases which may be look'd upon as Exceptions with reference to such as resign their Liberty up to God.

IV. Now all that has been said is equally true in respect of all Men without exception, if we consider them either as all fallen in their first Parent, or every one in particular for himself. All these Subjects continue always so far naturally equal and invariable. Judas as well as St. Peter has a spiritual Nature capable to lodge in it God and eternal Happiness; he has likewise, as well as he, an Understanding, a Will and a Body, and other-Faculties capable of the same Objects, tho' not proximately, for Reasons to be just now given.

V. (2.) Which are these, because the Subject created for Happiness is indeed incapable of causing it to itself, as well after as before the Fall; but after the Fall he is, as was said, proximately incapable of admitting it, indispos'd and chang'd as he is by wicked Acts and Habits that have given him wicked Inclinations, and subjected him to the Slavery and Tyranny of

E 3
good. (1.) His Slavery to Satan. (2.) The Corruption of his own Faculties. (3.) And that of corporal Nature.

Chap. III. of Satan, and to all the malignant Impressions of corrupt Nature. I suppose the Proofs of these Truths are seen in the foregoing Tracts; and so it will be enough here briefly to mark them only so far as they enter the Structure and Connexion of the System of Providence.

We must take Notice therefore that the Subject God created and design'd for Happiness, and who is of a Nature capable of enjoying it, is at present become, First, a Companion, or rather Servant and Slave of the Devil; as well because he has submitted his Liberty to him by consenting to his Demands and Temptations, as by turning away from God his Liberty and Faculties, he has fix'd them upon corrupt and mean things, for which his Heart was not made. This Disorder is the Devil's Element where this malicious Spirit tyrannically governs and rules all he meets in it. For the Devil is united to this corrupt Element almost as closely as the Soul is to the Body; and he disposes of it at Pleasure in Man, when he has his Consent either actual or virtual, when Man does not resist him. For this Reason it is, that the Liberty of every Sinner consider'd in *Adam*, and out of the Grace of God, is a Companion and Friend of the Liberty of the Devil, who having Access to it, never quits it, nor fails continually to draw it to all that is pleasing to Satan. They are like two Drunkards or Whoremongers well met, and fitted with Opportunities of Time and Place to satisfy their vile Passions. He that is the most wicked and debauch'd certainly solicits his Companion to all that's ill, persuades and carries him where e're he pleases. He acts on his Understanding by a thousand Imaginations and Thoughts, that he presents to it, on his Will by mixing himself with his Desires, awakening and hearing them, particularly by the Intervention of his Body, Blood, Humours and Spirits; and all this by means of that Disorder and Corruption which Man by Sin brought upon himself, his Body and all external Nature. Hence all the Motions of corrupt Nature are the Vehicles wherein the Devil conveys before the his Will to all the World, and to all Sinners (a). The Devil moves them in the most inward Parts of their Veins, Arteries and Bowels for the Advancement of his Kingdom, almost like Engines, and without their

(a) See the
Oecon.
of Sin.

Chap. 12.

§ 12, 13,

14. as also

the Oecon.

before the

Incarna-

tion Chap.

Veins, Arteries and Bowels for the Advancement of

3. § 45, 6,

per;

perceiving it. Hence the Scripture styles him, *The Chap. III. Prince of this World* (a); and the Members of Man's Body, *the Instruments and Weapons of Unrighteousness*, (a) John subjected and enslav'd to him whom they obey (b). 14. 30.

You see here the *first* Indisposition to be observ'd in the immortal Subject which God created for eternal Happiness, and designs to bring to it. The *Second* is the actual and habitual Perverseness of his Desire, which plants and roots in Man Ways wholly perverted, and forms in him a way of desiring and willing, of producing and directing his Acts altogether dark, carnal, selfish and interested in the proposing his End, and the Ways and Means of executing it. The *Third* is, the Disorders of his Body and its Humours, and the malignant Impressions of corrupt Nature upon this his distemper'd and wicked Body. (b) Rom. 6. 13, 16.

VI. I say it again, and can never say it sufficiently, VI. *Man's* nor the Reader think of it enough, and would to God *Impotence to Good, arising from these three cor- ruptions* our Eyes were sufficiently open, and our Hearts sensible fully to understand and feel it! that all Men since the Fall, and as born of the Sinner *Adam*, and till regenerated in the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, have these fine Qualifications for eternal Life, viz. (1.) They are the Companions, Friends, and even the Slaves of Satan, who inseparably attends them, rules and governs their Liberty which they have resign'd up to him, their Mind and Heart, their Passions and Imaginations, their Senses and Motions, their Words and Actions. (2.) That tho' there were nothing of all this, and the Devil did not act upon them to make them worse, yet is their Heart and Desire become a hellish Abyss that breaths out nothing but Stench and Abomination, whence there cannot proceed so much as one Thought that is not devilish, nor one Motion that is not perverse, wicked and abominable in the Sight of God: For this Heart is now nothing but a perpetual Spring of Filth and Ordure, that continually casts out nothing but impure and hellish Fumes, till God by his most holy Grace kill this wicked Heart, and put in its room in the Soul a new Principle and a new Spirit, which this wicked and criminal Heart had driven away to let the Devil enter into it, and to imagin, exert and direct its own Acts according to its own disorderly Fancy and Self-

Chap. III. Self Love. Add to this (3.) that tho' this Heart of corrupt Man were almost grown entirely brutish and stupid, so that it could not with any Freedom dispose of any thing but the Motions of its own Body, yet the Corruption and Disorder of his Body and of those that act upon it from without, would not suffer him to lead but a meer beastly Life, the most disorder'd, miserable and confus'd imaginable.

VII. *The State of Man after his Fall, and before his Regeneration.*

VII. This is in truth and without exception the very Disposition and State of every Man by virtue of that Birth he takes from *Adam* the Sinner, without the Grace of God, and before his Regeneration. If there have been Persons holy from their Birth, it was not by virtue of their being born of Flesh and Blood, and of the Will of Man; but because their Parents being themselves holy offer'd up their Children as soon as born to the Holy Ghost, praying him to sanctifie 'em, which Prayers the Holy Ghost heard and ratify'd by his Divine Operations. But this is not what we at present discourse of; but of what Men are by virtue of their meer sinful Birth, and before God's Grace and their Regeneration. Tho' they should begin to return to God, and to have some good Motions, and to do some good Works, yet till they have perfectly renounc'd Corruption and the Devil, and are perfectly dead to their wicked Heart and Desires; till they do perfectly deny their natural Motions and all the Impressions which their own Body and all corrupt Nature makes upon them; till then they are immediately incapable, I say not, to do, but even to receive and possess the pure Good; they are not yet so much as a *rasa tabula*, a Subject prepar'd and fitted for the Light and Peace of God. They have indeed, supposing them in the good Way and advancing forward in it, many sorts of Goods in them; but all as yet impure and mix'd with Evil, Error and Seduction, and Deceitfulness of Heart, with Darkness, with the Devil and his Element; so that before the perfect Death of the Old Man no Man living ought to trust his own Heart, nor to justify himself, seeing he has still within him a three-fold Hell, the Devil, the Corruption of his own Heart, and that of his Body and Nature, or of the World and the Universe. What therefore will become of such as

do

do not so much as think of Grace and its Inspirations, Chap. III. and so cannot by the help of it resist the continual Productions which these three infernal Sources are throwing up in them? I see no Difference between Men in this State and the Devil himself; only that these are insensible of their Evils, and have during this Life an Opportunity and Means of Amendment.

VIII. I have not at all exaggerated in what I have said concerning Man's Incapacity, I do not say to cause, but even to admit and to receive immediately real Happiness. He is as utterly incapable of it as Hell is of being Paradise: For he has within him a diabolical Hell or Satan himself, a Hell of the Corruption of his own Heart, and a Hell of the Corruption of his Body and of Nature, out of which there cannot flow the least Spark of Goodness. O blind and wretched Man! thou scoffest at these important Truths, because thou pretendest to discover no such three-fold Hell within thee, nor dost yet find thy self tormented in it, not considering that the Goodness of God moving him to grant thee an Opportunity to work out thy Salvation in quiet and by degrees and measures suiting thy Weakness, does also mix with thy Malignity a great many good things, and does for this End stupify for a time the Quickness of thy Sensibility, and the Pains of thy triple Hell, and hides them from thee; which unless he did thou wouldst die a thousand times with Fright and Despair at their first Discovery, and wouldst be overwhelm'd with Torments inexpressible, should their Activity be but once awaken'd in thee. Thou shalt see this at thy Death, when it will be too late to think of escaping, unless during this Life thou hast made it thy chief Business to say to God Night and Day by the Sighs of an humble Heart eschewing Evil, and breathing after divine Grace; *Look thou upon me, O Lord my God, and hear my Prayers, enlighten mine Eyes that I sleep not the Sleep of Death; lest mine Enemy (Satan) say, I have prevail'd against him, and mine Adversaries rejoice at my falling into Perdition. My Trust is in thy Grace, and my Heart shall rejoice in thy Salvation (a).* This is indeed the great, the capital and universal Disease of the Men of these Times; they neither see nor know the depth of their Corruption; they do not so

VIII.

Men's Insensibility in their universal Miseries, and their diabolical Malice in their Blindness.

(a) Psalm

13. 5.

much

Chap. III. much as believe that all they are, and all they do, all they think, desire and speak, is abominable and execrable before God, so long as it comes from the poyson'd Source of their Heart, without an entire renouncing of themselves and of all that is in them, and giving themselves up to the Instruction and Government of God's Holy Spirit, without which we cannot do nor will the least Good in the World. Having elsewhere prov'd these Truths, as necessary as they are, I shall enlarge no more at present. Whoever has a mind to see them in a Light the most lively and divine that can be wish'd for, let him consult the Works of Mrs. Bourignon, and especially, *The Renovation of the Gospel Spirit, Antichrist discover'd, the Light of the World, and the Touchstone*. For I, for my Part, freely own that I never yet saw any one since the beginning of the World, to whom God has discover'd more clearly, livelily and strongly and plainly the great Corruption of Man, than he has in our Days by this excellent Instrument of his Holy Spirit; and 'tis nothing but this Detection of Wickedness that makes all the Wicked and Hypocrites displeas'd at her, their proud Heart not enduring to be humbled and confounded, nor to hate and deny themselves. The Devil too, their good Friend, that is lodg'd in their corrupt Heart (as was said before) hating to be thus expos'd and laid open, has found out an Expedient by setting his Slaves on work with his two old Engines of Lying and Violence, against the divine Light and the holy Soul that publish'd it; I say, Lying and Violence, with which he abundantly inspires the Wicked of all sorts, Ignorant and Learned, who yet never fail'd to labour in the Service of their Lord and Master, that Murderer, Persecutor, Lyar and Slanderer from the beginning, who will one Day pay them their Wages unless they undo what they have maliciously done for him against the most divine, clear and solid Truth that ever appear'd in the World. But let us not leave our Subject.

IX. The
Difference
between
Man's Im-
perfection to
Good before
the Fall, and after it.

IX. I come to it again, and end my second Consideration (which was upon the Incapacity of the Subject which God designs to make happy) with these two Conclusions. The one, that as Man was incapable

before

before the Fall to cause his own Happiness, so like- **Chap. III.**
 wife is he since : the other, that whereas Man before
 the Fall was not proximately, or, if I may so say, po-
 sitively incapable to receive God, to desire him, to be
 united to him and possess him, he is since his Sin prox-
 imately and positively incapable of it, and that upon
 these three Grounds, *first*, because he is united to the
 Devil, God's Enemy ; *secondly*, because his Heart is be-
 come an eternal Fund of Corruption ; and *thirdly*, as to
 his Body, he is subjected to all the Irregularities and
 Disorders of the great and little World.

X. (3.) Let us now see what Providence has done in
 the *third*, as also in the fourth and fifth things, which
 are yet to be consider'd. As God before the Fall of
 Man was pleas'd to make it his constant and universal
 Rule to present to Man after a general and common
 Manner, the constant and universal, and yet the most
 singular Act of the Light of his *Word* and the Motions
 of his *Holy Spirit*, for the beatitude of his Soul, and
 likewise to present unto him the external Light and
 Benedictions of Nature for the good of his Body ; and
 did by his Divine Concourse and Prevention accompa-
 ny this Offer of the beatifying Object to the Subject he
 design'd to make happy : in like manner after the Fall,
 God being pleas'd to continue his Design of making the
 miserable Subject that was fallen, happy, made himself
 a Rule and an unchangeable and universal Law of this
 Will and Good-pleasure of his, which is this, that he
 will actually present to Man, as long as he lives in this
 State of Tryal, his Light and Divine Motions to his
 Interiour in a lively and constant, universal and singular,
 in a preventing and concurring manner, and to do the
 same in proportion to his Exteriour, by the offer of the
 Light and Blessings and support of Nature. (a) By do-
 ing us good, giving us Rain from Heaven and fruitful Sea-
 sons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness; (b) determin-
 ing the Times and Habitations of the People, that they might
 seek after God, if happily they might find him, since he is
 not far from us, for in him we live, and move, and have our
 Being.

X. (3.) The
 Providence
 of God does
 after the
 Fall uni-
 versally
 and con-
 stantly
 supply the
 Soul and
 Body with
 their bea-
 tifying and
 suitable
 Object.

(a) Acts
 14. 16, 17,
 (b) Ibid.
 Chap. 12
 26, 27.

XI. *New
Graces
which
God's Pro-
vidence
gives to
Man, after
his Fall,
both spiri-
tual and
corporeal,
for his Sal-
vation.*

XI. Nor was the Divine Providence content to do barely such things which of his Wisdom and Goodness he would have done had not Man sinn'd; but moreover, seeing Man was actually and continually distracted and carried to Ill, as well by the Spirit of the Devil that always stuck close to him after his Sin, as by the very Corruption of his own wicked Heart, and by the Disorders of his Body and of Nature; this merciful and Provident Charity, pardoning for *Jesus Christ's* sake Man's Demerit, and taking no notice of his Wickedness, has join'd his Holy Spirit to the Spirit of every Man that comes into the World; not indeed by a Conjunction unitive, of Friendship, of Peace, of Complacency, Inhabitation and Concord; but yet by an Union objective, calling, knocking and contradicting the Spirit of the Devil and its Suggestions, and drawing Man to Good. And this that he may hold out against the Devil (who is in Man whilst a Sinner) and may not be over-power'd by him, but may at last be

*(a) See the
Oecon. of
the Resto-
rat. before
the In-
carn. Ch.
VII. § 11.
as also the
six first Let-
ters of Mrs.
B.'s Funer-
al of false
Divinity,
Part 4.
where
these great
Truths are
divinely
well pro-
pos'd.*

enabled quite to expel him (a). And this good Spirit, join'd to Man's Spirit, instructs him, whether he will or no, gives him good Desires and good Motions, shews him a glimpse of his Divine Light, of Good and Evil, draws him to the one, and inspires him with an Abhorrence and Dislike of the other; that he may make Head against the Corruption of his Heart, which otherwise would hurry him blindly and without all Remorse to all sorts of Wickedness. Lastly, to oppose the Violence of the Corruption of Nature, God does as it were by force impress upon Nature both by his immediate Blessing, and by the means of his good Angels, benign Influences: he guides and governs it; and acts likewise kindly upon the Imagination, the Humours, the Spirits, the Blood and Passions of Man's Body, as well by doing so to resist the Disorders that the Devil would ever be raising in Nature by means of his Element of Corruption, which is intermixt and united with it, as to hinder, or regulate those which Man's corrupt Heart (who was to have govern'd Nature. but since his Fall was grown unfit for that Charge) might raise in it, and which it certainly does as soon as ever it is left to it self. God does and presents all these things to Man by way of Objects, as well
spiritual

spiritual as corporeal, and they act upon him as long as the time of his Probation lasts. Chap. III.

XII. (4.) In the fourth Place, as Divine Providence before the Sin of Man, had establish'd the Liberty of the Soul the occasional and admistive Cause of the efficacious and unitive Presence of Divine Objects, which Liberty of his he was pleas'd neither to determine nor limit; in like manner after the Fall, God was pleas'd to bring Man back to Happiness by making immutably and universally the same Liberty of Man the occasional and admistive Cause of the Entrance and interior Influx of his good Spirit, of his Inspirations and Motions, and of his efficacious Acting, and in the end of his most pure and most sublime Operations. So that if the Liberty (prevented as it is, and the Faculties by the Calls and Strokes of God) will turn away its Desire from all that is not God, and turn it and offer it up to God that he may operate in it, God will introduce into the Soul his Light and his Goodness with all his saving Operations. And that none might have any reason to complain, God has been pleas'd not to determine either by any antecedent Decree, or by any preventing or determining Concourse, or by any infallible, absolute or necessary Foresight, the Liberty of any Man, or its Acts. As to that, it is all one both after and before the Fall. The System is always the same in Substance. I will not forget by and by to handle the Difficulties relating to this Matter.

XIII. So that all that Divine Providence has left Man to do as his Duty and as the whole Business of his Life, is this, that the Liberty of Man turn away his Desire from all that is not God, or rather, that he consent to God's turning it away by his good Motions, and that he turn and offer it up to God, with himself and all that belongs to him. Then God will do all the rest. But unless Man do this, God will never supply this Defect, nor make him to do it. This is Man's Business, his proper and indispensable Task, which he cannot neglect without damning himself for Ever; and by fondly flattering himself in this Point go to Hell in a Feather-Bed. There is nothing in the World of greater Truth and Importance to us. This Duty is the Marrow and Quintessence of true Religion, of the true

XII. (4.)
After the
Fall Pro-
vidence
has estab-
lish'd Man's
Liberty as
the occasi-
onal and
admistive
Cause of
the Divine
Grace,
which Li-
berty of his
is wholly
undeter-
min'd.

XIII. The
only, indis-
pensable,
and sacred
Duty of
Man in
this Life.

Chap. III. true Worship and Service that God requires of Man.
 Our whole Duty consists in this, in turning away from all outward things, and from all Evil, and in entering into our Interior, and there praying the good Spirit of God who is there present, and desires to abide and act there, that he would be pleas'd to strive and fight against our Enemies, our selves, our own and Nature's Corruption, and against the Devil, who is truly in us as long as we are in Sin: In saying with David, to the God of the Heart (a), *Deliver me from mine Enemies; for I flee unto Thee so save me: teach me to do thy Will, for thou art my God; let thy Holy Spirit lead me in the right Way!* Whoever shall accustom himself to this holy Worship, and shall obstinately, as I may say, persist in this holy Exercise, shall at last see in due time the Salvation and Redemption of the Lord.

XIV. (s.) XIV. (s.) For, in the fifth Place, as God before the Fall had establish'd it for a Truth, for a Rule, for a Decree universal, impartial and immutable, that he would efficaciously and savingly communicate himself, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and his Divine Acts, to the Soul, proportionably and so far as the Liberty should turn its Desires and Faculties toward God; so likewise after the Fall, God, to restore Man's Happiness and to furnish all things necessary to that End by his Divine Providence, has decreed (and here is the Decree of Election) has, I say, decreed and establish'd this for an immutable, impartial, and universal Rule and Truth, that he will elect, take, possess, enlighten and rejoice efficaciously, savingly, and unitively, and at last, (to speak with the Mysticks) transformatively such Souls as shall turn themselves, their Desires and all their Faculties towards him; and that he will insinuate himself, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God blessed for Ever, into them; and will in them produce his divine and beatifick Operations, so far and in such Measures as the Soul shall turn it self to him. Here shall be no Exception or Change; and what was said before concerning God's Procedure before the Fall, is applicable to our present Case.

XV. I have not much enlarg'd upon these three last Considerations, viz. the Objects which God presents, the Liberty that receives 'em, and God's Correspondence therewith: not only because I have already sufficiently prov'd and explain'd 'em (as to the Substance of 'em) in the Treatises concerning the Restoration of Man and the Operation of God; but also because these three things, viz. the Offers of God to Man, and Man's Admission of 'em, and God's Acting or Correspondence upon such Admission, are things so complicated together, that what we are to say of 'em cannot be said in treating of 'em each singly and a-part. They must be consider'd and join'd together: and that is what I intend to do in the following Chapter, not to give a new Explication of them, but only so far to touch 'em as shall be necessary with respect to the Difficulties that relate to their Universality, Impartiality, and Man's indeterminate Liberty about 'em.

XV. The Design of the following Chapters.

CHAP. IV.

A System, and some Principles of Providence relating to the Foresight of Good and Evil, after the Fall of Man. That God desires the Evil he foresees may not come to pass; and that all the possible Good which he foresees, may come to pass: which he also is pleas'd to promote. The special Object of Providence.

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Chap. IV. and invariable Eternity is sufficient to himself. (2.) That God having a mind to manifest himself to himself, out of the Form (as I may say) of his Eternity, by various Contemplations variously rang'd, was indifferent as to this way of Manifestation of himself to himself, and might do it in what manner he pleas'd without determining or foreseeing all the future Modes and Rangings, as I may say, of his divine arbitrary Contemplations, thro' the whole Duration of Eternity: For all such orderly Determination and Foresight of the Manners of the Divine Acts and Sports are not only indifferent to God, who without these arbitrary Modalities might have rested satisfy'd in the indivisible Center of his pure Eternity; but are indeed contrary to his Liberty and Power.

(3.) *The Indifference of God either to think of, decree, or guide or foresee other things.*

(3.) The third Truth is this, that if God were free and indetermin'd as to these things *within himself*, and were not pleas'd to foresee or determine their Manners nor their Consequences, or the marshalling of their Combinations; much more was he free to *fally out of himself*, to think or not to think of any Ideas, to think of such or of others; to think or decree to give them real Existence or not; to think and decree to give 'em Liberty or not; to think of determining their Conduct, or not; to think and will to foresee all their Acts and all their Combinations or not. This was all indifferent to a God that was self-sufficient by the eternal and indivisible Thought and Possession of himself alone, and who might, if he pleas'd, have exercis'd his Liberty in himself; and with regard to himself alone without thinking of any thing else, as was said before.

(4.) *Actions of Man not determin'd nor foreseen.*

(4.) A *fourth* Truth is this, that God having created Man free in his Light, and in his Love, did foresee in general the greatest Part, or if you will, all the possible and positive Manners wherein Man might determine his Liberty and his Acts; but that he was not pleas'd either to determine them, or to foresee them as determin'd; much less to determine or determinately to foresee that Man would turn away from God, and that he should do so by such and such Ways and Actions all determin'd and foreseen.

(5.) The

(5.) The *fifth*, that God having created the Heaven and the Earth, the Stars and the Elements, had impress'd upon them Motions and Order as 'twere mechanically and brutally regulated; so that he could immediately discover all their Combinations and future Effects, they not having in them a Principle of governing themselves freely and of choice. Tho' I have

(5.) *Natural Motions and Events to be foreseen.*

not insisted upon this Truth, and which likewise is not disputed by any, yet have I in divers Places sufficiently made it out; and it will be of use to me hereafter.

(6.) The *sixth*, that God having subjected to Man's Liberty the Government of the World, and of the Stars too and the Elements; he might indeed have foreseen the greatest part or all the possible Ways and Manners wherein Man might dispose of 'em, and what Effects would thence follow; but that nevertheless it was not his Pleasure to determine or decree 'em, no nor to foresee 'em as determinately future.

(6.) *But not as subjected to Man.*

(7.) The *seventh*, that Man having fallen into Sin, has lost his Dominion over the World, and the Power of disposing of the heavenly and elementary Bodies at his Will; so that the Government of the World, as to what Power Man has over it, is again become almost brute and mechanical, the Stars and Elements acting mechanically upon his Body and Imagination, and they upon his Soul, let him do what he can. Not but that the Devil has a Hand here, and does but too much govern at his Will ever since Man's corrupting the World; but then he does it not by opposing but following and swelling the Tide of the corrupt Inclinations of Nature. By this it is plain, that it is an easie Matter to foresee determinately enough what will befall Man's Body; what Sensations and Impressions his Soul will thence receive and that it will thereby grow more and more Miserable and Wicked; yet without determining precisely in what Manner it will become so.

(7.) *The general Events of Man fallen may be foreseen.*

(8.) For, (and this is the *eighth* Truth remarkable) Man, altho' fallen, and not yet taken again into Favour, is still free. So that, supposing nothing but Ill in him, and nothing but Evil Objects presenting themselves to him from without after his Fall, (which would have

(8.) *But not determinately, or to be determin'd.*

Chap. IV. been his Case) yet may he by his Liberty diversly apply his Faculties, his Imagination, his Mind, his Passions of Sorrow, Rage and Transport, his Blasphemies and disorderly Motions to these Objects a thousand different Ways, which cannot without Absurdity be said to be determin'd by God, no nor so much as to be determinately foreseen by him. God to be Omnipotent, Omniscient and Over-ruling has great need indeed to foresee, to determine, nay particularly to predetermine all the abominable and blasphemous Thoughts, Motions and Disorders of the Souls and Bodies of the damn'd! Would not this be a ghastly Idea? And yet by the Principles of some, he must as particularly do all this as he does whatever is most under his Government, and even as much or more than he does his own proper Acts. If this be true, I know not what we are to think dreadful and abominable: if it be not, the common Doctrine of Determination and Prevision is stark nought and groundless.

(9.) *The Conduct of Man may with a kind of Certainty be determinately foreseen from the Principle of Habits.*

(9.) But I shall remark to you a ninth Truth that will carry us yet farther. Man being separated from God by Sin, and consider'd before God's receiving him to Grace, having no longer any good in him, and being united to the Devil and to corrupt Nature, necessarily receives Evil Impressions from himself, from the Devil and from Nature. By his Liberty he may receive 'em, as I said, in different Manners: but as these Manners are infinite, and some opposite to others, Man in Fact and in the Application does actually determine himself to some in particular, and fixes upon them and leaves the rest. So, his corrupt Fund and Heart is such and such away inclin'd, produces such and such Acts; and these Acts strengthen their Root and pass into Habits. On the other side, as the Devil, who observes the Inclinations and bent of Man's Heart, and the malignant Impressions of corporeal Nature to second 'em, always tempts Man after such and such a particular Manner, he also contracts a Habit of following such and such Temptations of the Devil, and of practising too afterwards of his own Accord without the Devil's tempting him. Lastly, the malignant Influences of the Stars, of the Elements, of his Body, and his Humours, acting as it were mechanically in

one certain Way on his Soul, the Soul by yielding thereto, turns this particular Act of yielding into a habit, or into one certain Vice. Now it is well known that Habits are a kind of second Nature, that is to say, a kind of necessary Principle necessarily producing such and such Acts, especially when this Principle is grown quick and active, and fortify'd in its Root and Acts by so urgent and fierce an Associate as the Devil is, and when External Objects and corrupt and corporeal Means are presented to him. See Man now, habituated as he is to certain wicked Inclinations, to certain Vices and Temptations of his own Heart, and of the Devil and corrupt Nature; see him I say now, in a State wherein the Substance and even the principal Circumstances of what he will do may be determin'd and foreseen particularly with a kind of Certainty and Necessity of Consequence natural and infallible. If the thing be of it self possible, doubtless it is so to God who needs only to will to discover what he pleases of it, to foresee it certainly by this Act alone of his Will.

Chap. IV



II. Moreover, this Certainty there is in Habits to produce some certain Actions, is not an absolute and physical Necessity that cannot, absolutely speaking, be chang'd; but is a Necessity which we may call *Moral*, that cannot be chang'd without great Difficulty, and sometimes more difficultly than a physical Necessity; this being to be hinder'd by the Power of God, whereas the other when it is obstinately maintain'd by the Liberty is no Object of Divine Power. For nothing can change the Liberty nor hinder the Determination or Effects on which it is obstinately bent: Nevertheless the Liberty being free, it may, notwithstanding all Prevition, absolutely speaking, vary 'em; yet the force of Habits, of Temptations and Vices, is the Cause that this does so seldom happen. I do not here speak of a change of Ill into Good, but only of the change of one Ill into another; of the change of one ill Action or ill Way, into another ill Action or ill Way. For this is enough for my Purpose to note from the very Source how the Wickednesses and Sins of Men may be foreseen particularly, determinately, with Certainty, and as things Necessary; and yet there may be no such thing as absolute Certainty concerning these

II. This Certainty is not a physical but moral one, that may not, tho' it almost always be ratify'd.

Chap. IV. particular Events but only a Moral one, but such as almost always happens. There are many other things that concur here, whereof we shall speak as our Method brings us to the Consideration of 'em.

III. Certain Punishments may be foreseen and foretold to Sinners, but conditionally and only with moral Certainty.

III. As then there is nothing more certain than this Truth, that God alone is the Source of all Good ; so is there nothing more certain than this other Truth, that Man divided from God by Vice and such and such Disorders, will at last find himself overwhelm'd with such and such painful Sensations, with such Mischiefs, Plagues and Sorrows, as are the natural and necessary Consequents of these Disorders, as has been prov'd elsewhere. Therefore one may foresee and foretell with Certainty and Particularity such and such Evils to such and such Sinners when one knows their evil Deeds and ill Habits, and the System, as I may say, of the Disorders of Nature. But such Prediction or Foresight being grounded only upon that of the evil Works of Man, it appears, *first*, that it is of its own Nature Conditional, however absolutely it be denounc'd ; *secondly*, that the Certainty of it is only Moral, and not physical and absolutely determinate.

IV. What God foresaw of Man after his Fall and before all Consideration of Grace.

IV. See then what God did foresee of Man after his Fall, and before he shew'd him Mercy ; not only Sins and Miseries in general, but also some certain Vices, some certain Evil Works and Habits, and some certain Miseries ensuing ; but with such Certitude as was only Moral as to the Particulars, whereas it was natural and necessary as to the Event, to the continuance and increase of Evil in general, supposing God had left Man in his Sin without shewing him Mercy. But in Case God should be pleas'd to show him Grace, things would then put on another Face, as I am going to shew.

V. God desires the Evil he foresees may not come to pass.

V. All these things, these Malignities and future Miseries of Man, whereof God foresees the Event in a certain and determinate Manner, as was said, were highly displeasing to God. So far is any Foresight or Decree of God from being the Cause of the Futurition of these things, or God from desiring they should so happen, that on the quite contrary, when he is pleas'd to look on them and to consider the necessary and morally determinate Consequences of 'em, he does it with the

the highest Abhorrence and an infinite Disallowance Chap. IV. both of the Evils and of their Event. And 'tis this supreme Aversion of his that makes him desire that what he foresees might never happen. This is not contradictory nor repugnant to the Fore-knowledge of God; on the contrary, as to the Foresight of Sin, it is natural and necessary to the most Holy Being not to foresee it without wishing what it foresees may never come to pass. For Sin and Misery is nothing else but something that is repugnant to the Will and Happiness of God, to which the Will of God is also reciprocally opposite. Therefore, to foresee Sin and Misery and their happening, is, as to God, to foresee a thing which he disapproves and wishes were not, nor ever would be.

VI. Whatever also the Event afterward be of these things, yet there follows nothing that implys any Contradiction, either with relation to God or the things themselves. For supposing the Ill foreseen do happen as it was foreseen, then was God's Foresight of it true, and the Desire of God that it might not happen is a Proof of his Divine Goodness, which cannot but have the highest Aversion for Evil; that is, a mighty Desire that there should not happen any Evil; were it not so, God might be suspected of Malignity. It is likewise a Proof of his Justice; for there is nothing so becoming God, or so just with respect to him, as to desire he might not be offended, or that Men should not deviate from his Will by Sin and Misery. But it will be said, this Desire of his would thus be charged with Weakness, the Thing not coming to pass as was wish'd. I think I have already sufficiently answer'd this Objection, and shewn, that God did not desire this, as we do natural and brute Matters. It was not God's Pleasure to will that the falling out of things, or their not falling out should be by constraint. He did not desire Man's Liberty should be destroy'd, nor that Man should not be able to determine himself whither he had a mind to determine himself. This is not the Object of God's Desire or his Power. God's Desire is the Good-will he has toward Man to make him freely happy, to which Good-will he adds Means and the Effects of his Power, which he offers Man that he may freely

VI. This Desire is conformable to the Goodness, Justice, and indeed to the Power of God, tho' the Ill foreseen does happen.

Chap. IV. embrace 'em. If he does not do it, and so falls into Mischief, the Foresight, Goodness and Power of God (who would not violate Man's Liberty) are perfectly untouch'd and not at all impeachable.

VII. *If the Ill foreseen one determinate way, should fall out some other way, the Divine Foresight would not therefore be less worthy of God.*

VII. But if the Ill foreseen comes to pass some other Way than that wherein it was determinately foreseen that it would come to pass, for Example, if, God having foreseen that the Sinner would give himself up to some one Vice, it should so fall out (give me leave to speak thus) that by the use of his Liberty he should yield to some other Vice inconsistent with the former, (and this, absolutely speaking, he may do) yet would not the Divine Foresight be therefore less true or less becoming God: because the Divine Prevision does not foresee these things as absolutely determin'd and necessary; but as things that may, absolutely speaking, be chang'd if Man will. For God sees and foresees above all things that Man is, and ever will be at all times free, and that, absolutely speaking, he may determine himself indifferently to any particular Way, amongst a thousand possible ones, which he shall best like: and tho' he foresees that Man's Habits, the Temptations of the Devil, and the Impressions of Nature incline him such or such a Way, and that therefore it is morally certain that such or such a thing will happen; yet, he foresees likewise that his Liberty, if it will use its Right and Power, is stronger than all this; that the Tempter is free to vary his Temptations, and that Man may withdraw himself from some certain Objects of Nature and give himself up to others. And so, tho' some other thing should happen than what God foresaw as morally certain and determin'd, yet would there nothing fall out contrary to the Nature of the Divine Prevision which does not absolutely exclude all other possible Ways of Events. The Nature of the Truth of these kinds of Pervisions and Predictions is compatible with the Possibility of their being otherwise accomplish'd; so that tho' they should come to pass otherwise, it would be no way inconsistent with the Nature of the Truth of 'em: and so they are always true after their Manner, which is free and not absolutely determinate.

VIII. But

VIII. But should the Evil foreseen not come to pass at all, then would God and the Angels of Heaven receive thence a mighty accessory Joy : and so far in this Case would the Prevision of God be from becoming unworthy of him, deficient, fallible and imperfect ; that on the contrary, it would then have its true Aim and most proper and real Accomplishment. Here I believe Men will be apt to fancy I have a mind to be Extravagant in advancing such strange Contradictions and Paradoxes that one knows not what to think of 'em. No, no, 'tis no such Matter. I speak Truths well grounded, excellent, and I thank God, clear and sound ones too. I have said (a) somewhere that God knew Sin, first, because it is his Will it should not happen. And so, when God foresaw determinately, and with as great Certainty as moral things are capable of, Sins and consequent Miseries, and these Evils do not come to pass, then does his Foresight enjoy its true Aim and Desire, and is then most perfectly accomplish'd. I will explain this clearly, if possible : for if this be once well understood, it will give us great In-sight into the Knowledge of God's Conduct towards Men, of his Predictions, of his Goodness, of his Sincerity, and of the Truth of his Promises, and of his Protestations that he wills not the Death of a Sinner, even after he has foretold it, and denounc'd it in the most absolute Manner imaginable.

VIII. If the Evil foreseen by God does not come to pass, then does God's Prevision attain its most perfect Aim.

(a) Occ. of Sin, Chap. V. § 2.

IX. When God, who might have rested eternally happy and satisfy'd with the Sight of himself alone, was pleas'd to issue out of himself, and cast his Eye upon some thing else, it was to behold out of himself the Portraitures of himself, and the Emanations of his Power, his Goodness, his Beauty and Happiness, as has been already demonstrated. The direct and true Term of God's Sight, and of the Will which he had to look out of his own Essence, is Good. For it cannot be Nothing ; seeing God by this his Will makes things to be : for the same Reason it cannot be Sin which yet was not ; and when he sees Sin, he does it only by seeing that the (b) Goodness he design'd such a Subject is not receiv'd by it ; so that the very Sight of Ill supposes the Will to do good. It is the same thing proportion

IX. The Object of the Sight and Foresight of God is what is good. God would not foresee at all the Particulars of Evil, if he did not design to take it away and bring

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Good in its room.

(b) See Oecon. of Sin, Chap. IV. § 6.

Chap. IV. ably in the Foresight of Evil, especially in the exact and particular Foresight of such or such Evils either of Punishment or of Sin. If God when he has discover'd some Evil in a thing, did not will the ceasing and discontinuance of it, he would let it alone without thinking any more of it, without applying himself to any further particular Consideration of it, to see or foresee it, or any of its Branches, Fruits or Consequences, or determinately to foretell 'em. No, he would then renounce all these hateful Sights, and would forsake the Direction of such a Subject and leave it to it self as he does the Devils with regard to themselves. For what Delight or Pleasure could God take to see how many Ways he might be hated, blasphem'd, curs'd, to see that done which infinitely displeases him? when his Divine Majesty has had a full Sight of Evil by considering that his Creature rejects the Good he does it (for this is in God the Sight of Evil) and when he foresees in general and indeterminately the obstinate and invincible Continuance of the Evil, by considering and seeing that the intelligent Creature does knowingly, wilfully, and deliberately resolve to reject all the good things and the Means to 'em which his Divine Goodness and Power presents it with, then God leaves this Subject to it self, without concerning himself any more in particularly foreseeing all the Wickednesses and Evils to which it may from thence forward abandon it self; excepting always, when this Creature shall happen to live among the Good, and may endeavour to pervert 'em. For then God will continually watch over all it does wherein the Good may be any wise concern'd. But we are not yet come so far, and what we have been saying respects the Wicked alone; abandon'd to his Sins and Miseries.

X. When God applies himself to foresee Evils, it is a sign he intends to take 'em away and to cure 'em. A Similitude.

X. But when God applies himself particularly to see and to foresee the Evils of a Subject, and when this Foresight is principally terminated upon this Subject, it is an infallible Sign God wills not the Foresight of 'em but merely that they may not come to pass. For God has not the foolish Curiosity so usual among Men, to will the Sight and Foresight of Evils merely to have the Ideas of 'em, as if this was a Matter of any great Importance to the Perfection of his Divine Knowledge, which

which may very easily be without all Ideas of Creatures. and that cannot be terminated upon the Ideas of Evil but only for Good, were it not for this End. Evil is so abominable to him that he would wholly leave it. It is with God in this Case as with a wise and charitable Physician: when he comes to inform himself of the Case of his Patient, he considers and looks narrowly into the Causes and Symptoms of the Distemper; and when upon the best Enquiry he foresees and foretells all the natural Consequences and Issues of it, it is a certain Sign that he intends to remove and cure these Evils, and to hinder by all possible Methods their dismal Effects. If he gains his End, and these dreaded Evils come not to pass; so far are his Pains and Skill and Prognosticks from being needless, vain and defective, because things do not fall out as he foretold they might, that on the contrary, 'tis this that perfects 'em, as I may say, and renders 'em exact and accomplish'd. For when a thing attains its End, it attains its Completion and Perfection; and consequently the Search and Fore-knowledge of a future Evil which flows from a Principle that desires the Evil may not happen; this Fore-knowledge does then attain its End, that is to say, its Completion and Perfection, when the Evil does not come to pass.

Let us apply all this to God without changing the Terms in the least, and let us thence conclude with an Evidence that nothing but affected Ignorance or fond Perverseness can darken, that, when God foresees and even foretells most determinately and particularly any future Evils, he does not only desire they may never fall out, and does also all he possibly can that they may not; but that, when they do not fall out, it is his Joy, and the Delight of his Saints, and the greatest Perfection of his Divine Fore-knowledge, which by that Means is most perfectly accomplish'd. And it is so indeed with respect to the Event of Evil; but then it is in such a way as is less pleasing to God, and as it were forc'd and against the Grain: which yet he does not absolutely hinder, because he will not force the Liberty of intelligent Creatures; whose future Evils he foresees as morally, but not absolutely certain and necessary,

XI. The
Usefulness
of these
Principles.
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Scripture:
and first,
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Methods
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ings of God
are pur-
posely us'd
by him to
hinder the
Event of
the Evils
he foresees
and fore-
tells.

XI. I can recommend these Truths as certain, excel-
lent and useful with some sort of Confidence; because,
I thank God, I see 'em perfectly and clearly in their
very Sources; and if I may venture to say so, I see
wonderful Consequences springing and following from
'em to dissipate the many and great Difficulties and
Clouds that have hitherto hinder'd our Sight of the
Wisdom and Goodness, and Mercy, of the Sincerity,
Justice and Veracity of God in his wonderful Dealings
with the Sons of Men. I call the Holy Scriptures to
warrant and witness these Truths, which are (as a
thousand other Means) made use of by God, on pur-
pose to hinder the happening of those Evils which
God did foresee, nay even of such which were by him
foreseen as determinately and certainly as possibly could
be in Moral things. When the Scripture represents
God as foreseeing, and foretelling too, the Sins and
Miseries of the World in general, or of some Nation
or Persons in particular, as when he foresaw and in-
deed foretold to *Noah*, to *David*, and by him, and by
Isaiah, by *St. Paul* and by *St. John*, that the Heart of
Man would always be a Source of Evils; that God look-
ing upon the Earth, especially towards the last Days,
should not find in it so much as one that did Good; that
the whole Earth would be plunged into the Darkness of
Death; that all would by an universal Apostacy forsake
God; that Men would run after Lies and Delusions;
and that all People would follow the Beast: or when he
foresaw, and likewise foretold by *Moses*, by *David*, by
Isaiah, by *Jeremy*, by *Ezekiel*, and even by *Jesus Christ*,
that the Jewish Nation would rebel against God, that
it would not know and receive, but Evil-entreat the
Messiah; that in the Days of *Zedechias* the People
should go into Captivity, *Jerusalem* be burnt, and that
unhappy Prince be led in Chains, and have his Eyes
put out in *Babylon*; in fine, when God foresaw *Cain's*
Murder of *Abel*, and an infinite Number of other Events
that respect particular Persons; in all these and the
like Cases, he took Cognizance of these Evils and fore-
saw and foretold 'em only to hinder their coming to
pass, and with a deep and hearty Desire that they
might never happen. The great and natural Aversion
God has to Sin, his own Words and those various Me-
thods

thods he makes use of to destroy it and its Effects, Chap. IV. ought fully to convince us of this Truth. He advertises, for Example, Men, Jews, Christians, and particular Persons, a thousand Ways to withdraw 'em from the Evils he has foreseen. He shews 'em what is Good; he commands the doing of it; he promises 'em mighty Rewards for so doing; he draws and allures 'em to it: he forbids what is Evil; threatens to punish 'em for it; he exhorts, protests and swears he would not have these Evils befall 'em; he comes and speaks, and prays, and groans and weeps for the Evil he foresees coming upon 'em to evidence how greatly he abhors the Event of it; he even dies to destroy Evil, he sends his Embassadors and Friends to perpetuate all these things, he gives good Inspirations toward Good, and Fears, and Abhorrence of Evil and Remorse after it; in a Word, what does he not do! And then where would be the Sincerity, the Truth and Goodness worthy a God, if after all it were not true that he really does not will the Event of the Evil he foresees, and that he does not therefore only foresee and foretell it that he might hinder its happening?

XII. Have you a mind to hear God protesting thus himself? *Jesus Christ*, in *St. Matthew*, foreseeing and foretelling that many false Prophets should come and should deceive many, does at the same time exhort Men to beware of 'em, and consequently, to hinder the happening of what he foresaw and foretold; and adds for a Reason of their preventing it, (a) *Lo, I have foretold you of it: as if he should have said; the Reason why I foretell you these things is purposely to hinder their befalling you, or any others that shall read or hear these Words of mine, which yet are those very Persons Jesus Christ foresaw would be deceived.*

XII. Proof, of the same Truth from express Words and Examples of Scripture.

(a) Matt. 24. 24, 25.

When in *Ezekiel*, he foresees and foretells concerning a Sinner, that *he shall surely die, or die the Death*, yet he does not desire this sad Event, but rather that it should not happen but the contrary; and this is what he even swears on his Life. (b) *As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he turn from his Wickedness and live. When I shall have said to a Sinner, thou shalt die the Death, if he turn from his*

Example the second.

(b) Ezek. 33. 11, 14.

Chap. IV. *his Wickedness he shall certainly live, he shall not die.*
 (a) *Ezek. 18. 23.* *(a) Why should I in any wise take Pleasure in his Death and not in his Conversion and Life?* He lets us see that his Fore knowledge and Prediction had no other Aim but to prevent the Evil coming upon him; for after he had foreknown and foretold it, he adds, (b) *turn ye therefore O House of Israel, and you shall live; and why will you die?* Should we not rather believe God even when he protests and swears, than credit the weak Understanding of Men, who presume to maintain the contrary, under pretence that they cannot tell how to make these Truths agree with the false Notions they have fram'd to themselves of Fatality, and of Nature, of the Properties and Perfections of the Divine Pre-science?

A third Example.

Here is another Unanswerable. God did undoubtedly foresee as determinately as possible the Destruction of Jerusalem by Nebucadnezzar, and the hard and grievous Captivity of Zedechias: God's Words in this Case are the most absolute imaginable. (c) *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, thus shall you say to the King of Judah, that hath sent you to enquire of me.---The Chaldeans shall return and shall War against this City and shall burn it with Fire. Thus saith the Lord, be not deceiv'd, saying, the Chaldeans will surely depart from us, for they shall not go away. And tho' you should smite the whole Army of the Chaldeans that War against you, and there were none left but wounded Men, yet should they rise every Man in his Tent and burn this City with Fire. And upon the King's more particular Enquiry of the Prophet concerning this Matter, (d) Is there any Word from the Lord? the Prophet answers him; there is: thou shalt be deliver'd into the Hands of the King of Baby'on, which is in other Places deliver'd with more Circumstances. There can be nothing more exprest than this, nor, it should seem, more absolute. Nevertheless, see what God says in general concerning all these things. (e) *Go tell the People all the Words I have said unto thee and commanded thee,--- May be they will hear them and return every one from the Evil of their Way; and I will repent of the Evil which I thought to do unto 'em for their wicked Actions. And see more particularly what God saith in the Case which I have shewn was so certainly foretold and fore-
 seen.**

seen. (a) The Prophet says to King Zedechias, Thus saith Chap. IV. the Lord, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: If thou wilt go forth willingly and surrender thy self to the Princes and Officers of the King of Babylon, thy Soul shall live, and this City shall not be burnt with Fire, and thou shalt live, thou, and thy Household. And when the King seem'd to doubt the Truth of this, the Prophet assures him, that his Predictions, his Counsel, and his Desire which were not his own but God's, had no other Design but to hinder these Evils from coming to pass, and to prevent 'em: he does from God, or rather God does by his Prophet, beseech the King to second the Good-will the Divine Goodness had for him, which was to put a stop to the ensuing Calamities: (b) I pray thee hearken unto the Voice of the Lord in that I say unto thee, that it may be well with thee and thy Soul may live. (a) Jer. 38. 17. (b) Ibid. v. 20.

Whoever comprehends the Agreement and System of this particular Case, or of any other, will easily understand all the rest: and the Difficulty, that if such and such things foreseen should not come to pass, then would God's Designs, and consequently his gracious and chief Purposes and Works that are annex to them not take Effect, would vanish. The Good would always come to pass, tho' without the Ill. and by other Ways; since God in his Power and Wisdom has infinite Ways of compassing one and the same End.

If you say, that in these and the like Examples we have an Account only of Promises and Threatnings, and not of Previsions and Predictions, and that the one must not be confounded with the other, this would be the childishest Cavil imaginable: for Threatnings and Promises, especially with relation to God, are nothing but Previsions and Predictions, or Declarations of things profitable or hurtful to Men. Prevision or Prediction is the Genus, Promises and Threatnings are two of its Species.

Now as all that is really true of the Genus is so likewise of the Species, what Incongruity is it to alledge the Species thereby to shew what is in the Genus, which contains no more than all the Species. Moreover, I do maintain it is impossible to meet with any Previsions or Predictions more formal and express than those are in this Case of the Prophet *Jeremy*; and nothing

Chap. IV. thing but a mere Desire to oppose the Light of Truth can make any one dispute it.

*Example
the Fourth.*

After this last Example out of *Jeremy* I might well be excus'd from adducing any more, seeing this may serve for a Model for all Cases that relate to the foreknowledge and fore-telling of Evil. Yet I will give some others, and first, the Prediction of *Jonas*, with the Gloss of the Gentlemen of the Port. Royal upon it; and I do it the rather, because they do but give us *St. Chrysostome's* Sense of the Words. It is on the third Chapter and fourth Verse of *Jonas*. *Jonas cry'd and said, Yet forty days and Niniveh shall be destroy'd. Why, O holy Prophet, (says Chrysostome) dost thou foretell evils that shall never happen? For this very reason it is, answers the Holy Man, that I foretell them, that they may not happen.*

(a) Mic.
2. 11.

The same Persons having thus translated a Passage in *Micah* according to the vulgar Translation (a), *Would to God I had not the Spirit of the Lord, and that what I say were rather lies!* They thus comment upon it, *Tho' the Prophet honour'd the Gift of Prophecy as became him, which he had received from the Holy Spirit; yet his great Charity, when he saw the dire Calamities that were falling upon Israel, made him say, that were it in his Power, he could rather wish his Prophecies were false, than to see them accomplish'd by the utter ruine of his People. If the Prophet had so great Charity, (and if that came from God, as certainly it did, who to be sure has it himself in a much higher degree) much more shall the infinite Charity of God make him desire his Previsions and Predictions might be, I do not say vain and frustrated, but not fulfilled by the happening of Evil; that so they may not be in vain, but may attain their most perfect Accomplishment, and the highest Perfection they are capable of, which is to prevent the Evil they foretell as conditionally certain.*

*The Fifth
Example.*

Yet one more Example. None, that in the least understand the Prophecies, make any doubt but the Prophecy of *Zephaniah* is a Prevision and Prediction of the great, universal, and final Destruction of the Wicked through the whole Earth by the universal Plagues and Judgments of God, of which *Isaiah*, the 24th of *St. Matthew*, and the *Revelations* are so full. Now at the very same time that God foretells and gives many particular

particular Circumstances of these Events, he also inter- Chap. IV.
mixes Warnings to these wicked and abominable Men, by which he testifies his Desire that by their Conversion they would hinder the coming to pass of these Evils (b). *Gather your selves together, yea gather together, O Nation not desirable, before the Decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff; before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you; before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.* This is so clear that I shall say no more upon it.

XIII. But I see I am insensibly fallen upon the Pre- vision and even Prediction of Evils that concern Man only after the Offer of Grace, whereas the Method of my Subject has yet brought me only to the foreseeing of the Evils that were coming upon Man after his Fall, before any Consideration of God's offering him his Grace. This is indeed true. Yet, as the nature of Predictions, and of all sorts of Previsions of Evil, is in substance the very same that God had before all Consideration of his making Man any Offers of Grace, and may be illustrated and clear'd by such as suppose the Offer of Grace, I thought I might take the Liberty to prefer the Usefulness of this Illustration to a too rigid and exact observance of Method, which I now am going to pursue again.

XIV. Suppose we therefore Man in the State of the Fall, and before God's Offer of Grace; and that in this State God foresees in general, *First*, That Man, supposing him to have no other Principles or Objects but what he then has, will necessarily and infallibly fall into infinite Mischiefs, and that by a natural, or more than natural, and absolutely certain Necessity. *Secondly*, And then that God is pleased to enter into a more particular Search and Foresight of these Evils, by foreseeing that Man will give himself up to such and such particular Vices and Actions, and will draw down upon himself such particular Evils and Miseries (a particular Determination this, only of moral necessity and certainty). *Thirdly*, That God desires this his Foresight may not take Effect, nor be ratified by the Event. And thus far it was that we were come.

(b) Zeph.
2. 1, 2.

XIII. The
foreseeing
and fore-
telling of
Evil, whe-
ther before
or after the
Offer of
Grace, are
all the same
as to what
concerns
our present
Subject.

XIV Three
Considera-
tions, which
sum up the
whole of
what has
been said.

XV. Go

XV. How
God fore-
saw Good
as possible
and future
in Man af-
ter his Fall.

XV. Go we on now and consider, that as God has seen and foreseen that Man after his Fall being left to himself. would do nothing but commit Evil and suffer for it (having in him and before him nothing but ill Principles and ill Objects;) and that withall having foreseen that he being still Free, might set a-Work and determine sometimes one Evil Principle and sometimes another, now be led by one ill Passion or Object and then by another at his own Choice; hence one may see how easie it was for God to foresee, that if he was pleas'd to give again to Man good Principles, and to offer him a-new, good Objects, that then Man, who was still Free, and was not fallen out of pure Malice, and with Knowledge and full Resolution to continue in Wickedness, might recover out of it, and freely cleave to the good Principles and follow such good Objects as well inward as outward, that God should present unto him.

XVI.
God fore-
seeing
Good possi-
ble, will
endeavour
to bring to
pass this
his Fore-
sight, and
to hinder

XVI. This new Foresight of Good in fallen Man being opposite to the Event of unmixt and eternal Evils which God foresaw before, and which it pleas'd him therefore to foresee that he might prevent 'em, God will heartily join Issue here, and will labour to further and facilitate the Event of Good, that is to say, he will give Man outward and inward Graces, to make all the Good he sees may possibly happen to Man actually do so.

XVII. Af-
ter Man's
Fall and
the Offer of
Grace, God
foresees the
Salvation
and Dam-
nation of
every Man
only possi-
ble, without
foreseeing
or decre-
ing deter-
minately

XVII. Thus the Foresight of Evil, which aim'd at its not coming to pass, is much lessen'd according to God's Desire: yet is not the Event of it absolutely hinder'd, nor the Object of his gracious Prescience altogether certain.

If Man at the very first could be put or really were in a State wherein there were in him or without him only good Principles and good Objects, good Motives and good Habits, and those strongly fortified, then without doubt the Prevission of Good in general would be of absolute Certainty as to its Event, and the Foresight of Evil would attain its Perfection, which was that Evil might not happen. But the Evil in and out
either of 'em.

out of Man being to cease only by his Consent and Chap. IV.
Co-operation, till this Co-operation of his be perfect-
ed, and his Liberty be habitually, absolutely and fully
reign'd to God, so long does the Evil subsist in him
and out of him; and the Good which God also gives
him subsists likewise in him and out of him. And thus
has Man a good and an evil Principle, good and evil
Objects, and being free may chuse which of the two
he pleases: God will assist him, to draw him to Good;
and the Devil in Conjunction with his own Corrup-
tion and with that of corrupt Nature will assist him to
draw him to Evil; and as to himself he may give up
himself to which he pleases, to Good or Evil, to Life
or Death, without God's foreseeing determinately or
much less decreeing that he shall give himself up to
one side and not to the other. God, in this State,
foresees Man's Salvation simply as possible, and his
Damnation only as possible and no more. We suppose
Man as yet not to have contracted any wicked Habits
of voluntarily rejecting the new Graces of God.

XVIII. This is the *Object* of the *Divine Providence* XVIII.
after Sin, and since God's good Pleasure to raise the
Sinner out of it and to save him. This *Object* about
which for the future the Divine Providence will con-
cern it self, is, A Man to whom God foresees there
may infinite Evils happen thro' his own Fault if he
turn to them and continue in 'em, and infinite Goods
thro' the Divine Grace if by his Liberty he embrace it
and correspond with it, which Liberty of his God will
endeavour to assist all sorts of Ways, by his continual
Cares and Researches, by more special Foresights, and
by the Effects of all kinds of Methods, as we have seen
at large elsewhere (a); and I intend to touch upon
some of 'em again, or rather to remark some new and
weighty Truths relating to them.

*The true
Object of
Provi-
dence af-
ter the Fall
of Man:
and God's
Will to
show him
Mercy.*

(a) In the
Vols. of
the Resto-
ration
and Co-
operation

CHAP. V.

How God has given Man and the World to Jesus Christ to Restore 'em, and how Jesus Christ does by his Divine Providence watch over 'em. Some Examples that may serve for all Cases. Adam and his Posterity, and first Cain. How Providence furnish'd them with all necessary Means to keep 'em from Evil and to make 'em Happy.

I. A Truth I.

to be ob-
serv'd in
the follow-
ing Dis-
course. God

does not re-
new nor in-
crease his

Graces but

upon corre-

sponding

with what

he first

gives.

(a) Oec. of

Sin, Ch. 2.

§ 8. and

Oec. be-

fore the

Incarn. Chap. 5. § 6, 7.



E must here call to mind a Truth formerly (a) propos'd, viz. that when God had made an intelligent Creature to whom he gave his Light and his Love and all his preventing Graces, he resolv'd, to make it his inviolable Rule

and Decree not to encrease them, or not to give any new ones to it, but upon, and in proportion to, its cor-responding with him by its Liberty, Desire and sincere Love.

Upon this it came to pass, that the Devil being fallen, besides other Reasons God had, not to offer him Grace any more, this is one, because the Devils cannot present to God an Act of Love and Desire towards him, upon which God might yet shew them new Favour, which he has resolv'd not to do but by way of Reward to our Correspondence with what he first gave.

Incarn. Chap. 5. § 6, 7.

II. This

Truth

holds good

after as

well as be-

fore the

Fall.

II. 'Tis true indeed, God's preventing Graces do not require antecedently in the Creature an Act of Compliance with something that went before; this being a Contradiction. It is true likewise, that what Graces God should bestow upon a Creature after its Fall, may be consider'd as preventing Graces. Yet if we look more exactly into 'em they are not so in themselves; they being given in Consequence of the first Graces of Creation, and are a renewing or increasing of them.

So

Chap. V.



So that they do antecedently require Acts of Correspondence, without which God could not bestow them, by reason of this Will of his, by which, after he had made his Creature in a State of Grace and Favour, he resolv'd not to renew or encrease his Graces but according as his Creature should by its Desires and Love correspond with them. God did at first do and give all things to his Creature out of his pure Love which he bore to it in a preventing Manner. But he will not encrease or renew his Gifts to it but upon Condition, and upon the Occasion of the Love and Desire which his Creature shall freely bear to him by way of Correspondence.

A Truth this of exceeding great use. For hence is the Necessity of a Mediator evident, as was observ'd elsewhere (a), that there must be One to supply and satisfy Man's defect of Correspondence, and to derive upon the Sinner by his Desire and Love, such new In-Graces and Gifts as God would not continue, nor encrease or renew but on his Creatures corresponding. From this remarkable Principle it appears likewise, how, after the Graces which God has again presented to his Creature in Correspondence with the Desires and Love of the Mediator, he will neither augment 'em, nor give any new ones, nor lessen the Pains which the Sinner must undergo, but according as, after his Admission to Favour, he shall himself correspond with God by his Liberty, by his Desires and by his Love; or as others shall in his behalf offer up to God Acts of Love and Correspondence. But we must not here descend to Particulars, tho' we might there discover great Light to explain the Justice of God's Dealings with Men in divers Instances.

(a) Occ. before the Incarn. Ch. 5. § 6.

III. God seeing the Devil being fallen was incapable of the Renovation of his Grace; as well thro' the pure Malice and Spirituality of his Sin, as because there could not from him flow any Act of Correspondence to draw down the Divine Grace; was pleas'd to provide that Man (whom now he resolv'd to create) might not fall into the same Misery. For God plainly foresaw that Man, were he made in the same State as the

III. How God by his Providence hath provided that if Man should chance to fall, there should be

G 2

Angels

one to exert in his stead Acts of Correspondence, to obtain the renewing and increase of Grace.

Chap. V. Angels were, might irrecoverably sin as well as they. He therefore foreseeing this Fall of Man possible and irremediable, intended, according to the Na-

(a) See a-
bove Chap. 3. § 5, 9, 10. Nature and Aim of his Divine Prescience of Evil (a), to do all he possibly could to hinder its coming to pass: for which Reason, he not only made Man of a Nature somewhat coarser than the Angels, that his Sin might not be so spiritual and malicious; but likewise intended to unite himself to Man's Nature and to take to him-

(b) Col. 1. 15. self the first Son of Man, (b) *The First born of every Creature*, and make him as it were his Throne, his Conduit and Organ, by it to communicate with Man, and so to lay the Matter, that if Man chanced to fall into Sin, and so ceasing to correspond to God's first Mercies and being incapable himself ever to do it, to which Acts of Correspondence alone God decreed the Continuance, the Encrease and Renovation of his Graces, should always have regard, intending, I say, upon this Failure, that this Son of Man, this Elder Brother of all other Men, in short, that this **JESUS CHRIST** born of *Adam* a little after his Creation (c) should offer (c) See the Oecon. of to God his Love, his Desires, his Liberty and his Sin, Chap. Heart in favour of Man, and so make up his past neglect of Correspondence, and by the infinite Merit of his Acts and of his Divine Mediation bring down the Grace of God upon Man. I have prov'd, and at large explain'd this great Truth in the Treatise of the *Restoration of Man*.

IV. Before the Foundation of the World God chose Men to eternal Salvation in and thro' *Jesus Christ*

IV. Hence we see how, before Man was created, or this World we live in was made, God's good Providence watch'd over Man and that God design'd to unite Men to himself and make 'em happy in and thro' *Jesus Christ*, either by always conversing with them by him (who is the very same God that created Man) and thro' him communicating to 'em all his Graces; or, in Case they should fall, by making them fresh Offers of his Graces answering the Merits and Love which *Jesus Christ* would present to the Divinity in their behalf: after which, God finding them restor'd by *Jesus Christ*, and also fill'd with his Graces by their own Correspondence, might chuse 'em in his Son to unite 'em eternally and happily to himself.

V. Now

V. Now this last Case, viz. that of his Fall hap-
pen'd. Man sin'd and reduc'd himself to that Incapa-
city which we have already seen. And Jesus Christ
foreseeing in the Divine Wisdom, to which he was per-
sonally united, that Man not having sin'd thro' so pure
and refin'd a Malice as the Devil had, might be
reclaim'd, supposing God's Graces were given him a-
new; which he demanded of his Father for Man with
so infinite a Love and so pressing Instances, that he
obtain'd of his Father all those Graces we have al-
ready mention'd, with the Conditions also annex'd to
them.

V. Jesus
Christ an-
swer'd
God's Ex-
pectation
and so ob-
tain'd
Grace for
Man.

VI. Ever since the Son of God interpos'd as Media-
tor between God his Father and Men his Brethren,
(not to say from his first Birth) God has given him the
World and Men to bring them back again to him (a)
to redeem and save, to govern and conduct them: So
that since the Fall JESUS CHRIST GOD-MAN
is he that presides over the Divine Providence, and
that is to supply all Necessaries both to Men and all
the Creatures, in order to render 'em happy and glori-
ous as they were before the Fall. He is the true God
that must provide for, govern, conduct and save us; the
Redeemer of the World, that upholds all Nature and all
Things by his powerful Word says St. Paul (b). His De-
sign is this, to furnish us with Ways and Means to ex-
tirpate the Evil and to do it effectually, and to set the
Good in its room; and so at length to present to his
Father his Creatures restor'd, that his Father may by
him communicate to 'em his Happiness and his Glory.

VI. Jesus
Christ God-
Man ever
since the
Fall of A-
dam pre-
sides over
the Govern-
ment of the
World. His
great De-
sign.

(a) Psal.
2. 8.
Isa. 49. 5.
Heb. 11. 2.
(b) Heb.
1. 3.

VII. For the attaining this End let us see how this
Divine Saviour has begun the Work of Providence,
whereof he is the Steward and Dispenser. But first, let
it be observ'd, that we must hence-forward no more
consider Providence, Predictions and Prophecies, with
relation only to the pure Divinity, but with regard to
God in Jesus Christ, or simply with regard to Jesus
Christ. This must be also noted in most of the things
that are said of God, of the Lord, of the Lord of Hosts,
in the Old Testament; all these things, excepting a
very few Passages directly refer to Jesus Christ, and
must be understood of him: and by this means
we shall save abundance of figurative Senses that are
usually

VII. Pro-
vidence,
and all
that the
Scripture
says of God
by way of
Anthropo-
pathy,
ought to be
explain'd
properly
with re-
spect to Je-
sus Christ.

Chap. V. usually without any Necessity, put upon such places of Scripture as ascribe to God corporeal or humane Affections, which are for the most part true in the utmost strictness in the Letter, as are the several Apparitions; and when it is said, the *Israelites* grieved or troubled God, that God repented he had made Man, or of his Design to punish such a Person or Nation which he after pardon'd. This is all literally true. For it was *Jesus Christ*, true God and true Man, who did all this, and who as God and as Man was susceptible of both divine and humane Properties.

VIII.

Three Evils of Man.
Three Remedies apply'd by the Providence of *Jesus Christ*. He takes the Angels as Associates in the Ministry of Providence for a time.

VIII. This Adorable and Blessed Saviour, perceiving in fallen Man these three principal Obstacles, viz. 1. The Corruption of the Heart of Man now become Ignorant and Wicked; 2. the Devil united to him and to corrupt Nature; 3. the corporeal Corruption and Disorder of Nature and of all the World; oppos'd to them these three Antidotes, viz. 1. His good Spirit, 2. the good Angels, 3. the Blessing he bestow'd upon Nature: Each of these three good Things is set against its respective evil one; but as the three Evils are complicated and act mutually upon each other, so it is also with the good ones.

To the Corruption of Man's Heart the good Spirit of God is directly oppos'd, which, by as many Rays and good Motions as are necessary to give us Power to correspond with 'em, enlightens and strikes the Heart of every Man that comes into the World, as has been largely explain'd elsewhere. To the Devil and his Temptations are oppos'd the Holy Angels, which God sends forth to inspire good Thoughts and holy Imaginations into Men by the same Ways the Devil endeavours to inspire ill ones, and so they make head against the evil Spirit, provided Man will hearken to and follow the good Motions they inspire him with. And to the Corruption of Nature is oppos'd the Blessing of Nature which the Son of God sheds and preserves in it and in the whole Universe by the Light, Order and Fecundity which he still maintains therein.

But as the Son of God was not pleas'd yet entirely to take away all the Corruption of the Universe; which Corruption is the Element wherein the Devil takes his Pastime; and which Man, full of inward

Cor-

Corruption may yet increase and spread over the Material World, which would eclipse the Divine Blessing, and immediately give the Devil again a full Right over the Visible World; *Jesus Christ* to prevent this Ruine which he foresaw, has taken to himself the Angels as Associates in his Government of the World.

Chap. V.

IX. He has therefore subjected this World to Angels; but only for so long time as its Corruption remains: for (a) *the World to come*, (when *Jesus Christ* shall come to reign in it in Glory after the Destruction of the Wicked,) *shall not be subjected to Angels*, says *St. Paul*. But 'tis quite otherwise as to this. It was very congruous that the charitable Providence of *Jesus Christ* should oppose the Disorders which the evil Angels would be still raising in Nature, opposite Spirits to keep up good Order in it, to regulate and govern it, and also to assist the Ignorance of Man, who without their help would throw himself headlong into a thousand Dangers, and would take wrong and pernicious Courses, thinking he did no harm, or it may be thinking he did well: This God obviates and presents by Means of his good Angels, to whom he has put this World in Subjection.

IX. *Jesus Christ governs the World by the Mediation of Angels.*

(a) Heb. 2. 5.

In Effect, we need but open the Bible, to see every where there how God has set his Angels, some over the Stars, others over the Elements, others over the Fire, the Air, the Waters, the Earth, over Plants, over certain Countries, Nations and Persons. The Apocalypse, nay the whole Scripture convinces us that God administers all by the Mediation of Angels, Nature, the Law, and Grace is self, or at least many Means of Grace. I believe none will question this Truth, and so I will not set about a more particular Proof of it by citing a heap of Scriptures to that purpose.

X. Only it must be noted that the good Angels do not offer Violence to Nature, nor govern or dispose of things out of Humour and Caprice. They preserve in it the Blessing of God; and knowing the hidden Springs of things, they do so combine 'em as to produce astonishing Effects beyond the Power of Man to imitate. So that the Course of Nature, tho' subject to Angels, yet it is still carried on by natural Ways.

X. *The Angels govern the World by ways agreeable to Nature, which may also in part be foreseen.*

Chap. V. and we might foresee some of those Ways did we but exactly understand their Principles. From this must be excepted Cases extraordinary and miraculous, which happen whenever the Goodness of God is pleas'd to shew it self in favour of some of his singular Friends, or when his Justice is pleas'd to manifest it self upon some notorious Sinners, &c.

XI. Providence has equally furnish'd all Men in Adam with these Advantages.

XI. The Providence of Christ has provided all Men equally with those Advantages in Adam. It gave 'em to Adam that from him they might equally descend upon all his Posterity without Exception. So that had it been possible that all the Men that are born of Adam, and that ever shall be, could then have actually sprung from him, they had all been equally advantag'd with these Blessings.

XII. God has neither determin'd nor foreseen the Number of Individuals that were to descend from Adam, much less has he elected some of 'em and reprobated the rest.

XII. We must not here be misled by this double Error, viz. that God foresaw, nay and determin'd too, all the Individuals that were to be born of Man, and that out of these pretended Individuals determinately foreseen, God has chosen some and rejected others, resolv'd to secure some and let the rest perish, to save some and damn others. These are two Chimera's that Men have invented either under false or ill understood Pretexs. They have invented the first, as well because they understood not that the Knowledge God has of the Creatures is perfectly free and arbitrary, and by no means necessary to him; as because they knew not the Nature of God's Decree (a), nor of the Fecundity of his Works. And they have imagin'd the second from their Ignorance of the Nature of God, of his Goodness, of his Act, and of the Sense of the Scriptures, and particularly of the Ninth Chapter to the

(a) See Oecon. of Romans.
Creation, Chap. 5. and 7. n. 20.

XIII. In what Cases God has foreseen, determin'd and foretold the Birth of some particular Persons.

XIII. 'Tis true, God has foreseen and determinately foretold the birth of some particular Persons long before they were born, as of Isaac, Josiah, and others: But there is a great difference between this and our present Case, wherein we are considering the Root of all Mankind antecedently to all Determination of his, to any Correspondence of his with God, antecedently to any of

of his Works or Habits. But when Men are multi- Chap. V.
ply'd, and some have in a singular Manner obey'd
God; or that God, after their having fallen into an
exceeding Corruption of Manners, is pleas'd to raise
them up again by the Means of some chosen Servants;
in this special Case, God to reward some resolves to
give them such and such Children as it shall best please
him; and to assist others, he determines to bring into
the World at such and such times some holy Instru-
ment, as *Josiah* for Example. Here Determination,
Foresight and Prediction, the most particular and cir-
cumstantiate imaginable must be allow'd. For 'tis ve-
ry easie for God to cause, either by his own immediate
Influences, or by his Angels, that good Souls that
have habitually resign'd themselves to him and fol-
low'd his good Inspirations, shall be placed in such
Circumstances as produce such Effects as he has deter-
min'd. But it is a great Mistake to make general and
universal Rules of these extraordinary and special
Cases.

XIV. Nor must we any more fancy that God, after
his having receiv'd *Adam* into favour again as was
said, was pleas'd to foresee and to determine a-fore-
hand that he should either be sav'd or damn'd, that he
should do this and t'other, that he should have just
such and such a Number of Children, a wicked *Cain*
and a righteous *Abel*, that he should live precisely so
long, no more nor less. I say it with full Assurance
and in the calmest Light. These are all only the Chi-
mera's of Men's sick Brains.

The Truth is, God has foreseen that *Adam* was and al-
ways would be perfectly free; that he might be sav'd or
damn'd at his own Choice; that he had Power either
to accept or reject his Grace; and that having once
accepted it and having got a habit of corresponding to
God, his Salvation was then become more certain than
his Damnation: but once having arriv'd at the Degree
of perfect Resignation of his Liberty to God, then
God foresaw his Salvation wholly certain, as it were,
and elected him in a special Manner as his Spouse, as
a chosen Person that morally speaking could not be
lost; seeing he had no longer any Will of his own;
and that God's Will could not do him any hurt, and
that

Chap. V. that it was now a Hell to him to be out of the Divine Will. 'Tis true also, that God did foresee that Adam was free to beget fewer or more Children as he pleas'd, and that in a State wherein he did more or less fear God, to offer his Children more or less to God, to take more or less Care of them as he pleas'd; and hence in part came that difference which was afterwards observ'd in them.

Lastly, It is true, that the Body of Man being by Sin fallen under the Dominion of the Stars and of the Material World, God knows determinately how long that Combination of Causes that preserve it will last, and when it will break, and so he foresees that naturally the Life of Man cannot exceed such a Term: he sees likewise that Man by his Liberty and ill Living may shorten it more or less; or by his Prayers and Obedience may move God to prolong it.

XV. That the Term of Life is so set, as to be lengthen'd or shorten'd.

XV. So that it is very true, *first*, that the Life of Man, and indeed of every Man, has certain Bounds which it cannot naturally pass, and that God if he pleases to look on them can certainly foresee them. 2. It is in the *second* Place very true, that Man may shorten this Term by his ill Behaviour. 3. And in the *third* Place, that God may, notwithstanding his determinate Foresight as to the natural Course of things, lengthen it. The Holy Scripture is very expresse and plain in all the three Cases. As to the first it says, (a) *His Days are determin'd, the number of his Months are before thee: thou hast set his Bounds that he cannot pass.* To the second it says, (b) *Blood-thirsty and deceitful Men shall not live out half their Days.* To the third, (c) *Honour thy Father and thy Mother that thy Days may be lengthened in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee:* And we have in King Hezekiah an Example of this Lengthening (d). Does not our Conscience plainly tell us, maugre all the fine Glosses by which some learned Men do their best to renounce Common Sense, that God would but mock Mankind in thus speaking to them, and sending others to tell them so too, if it were true that their Life and their Death were so precisely, infallibly and immutably fatalized, and that God knew it very well, tho' his Discourse supposes the quite contrary?

XVI. I will make this evident by a familiar Instance. Every one knows there are Clocks or Watches of a different Make, and that as the Springs and Chains are longer or shorter, so they will go fewer or more Hours, some fifteen, twenty or thirty; some a Week, or many Months. Whoever is acquainted with the different Movements of these Machines, knows determinately that being wound up they will go precisely such or such a time and no longer: it is not naturally possible they should go any longer, but it is very possible they may not go so long; and that before the natural Term of their Course be finish'd a thousand Mischances, as Falls or other Accidents may happen that are very common and may stop their Course and make them stand: but if some new Cause come in and that more powerful than the simple natural Force of the Spring, it may wind up the Watch a-new that was naturally going down, and so prolong its Course. Thus it is with the Life of Man. From the Minute of his Formation the Spirit of the Universe, and of the Stars entring into him frames his Machine, his Spring and his Chain, weaker or stronger, longer or shorter; and from his Birth when he does plentifully suck in and incorporate into his Blood by Respiration the same Spirit of the Elements and of the Stars, then is his Machine more or less wound up, and after that, it is naturally impossible it should go beyond the Term then determin'd. But very commonly it does not reach that Term, and almost all Men shorten their Days, some more some less, by their Disorders and ill Lives; whereas on the other hand, God lengthens the Days of some few Persons, there being but few that deserve their Lives should be preserv'd after so miraculous a Manner. This is, by the by, the whole Mystery of the Determination, Shortening, and Prolongation of Life, about which Men have made so much Noise and so many Disputes.

XVI. An
Explication
of this
Truth by a
palpable
Similitude.

XVII. When Adam begat Cain, who prov'd a wicked Man and a Murderer of his Brother, this came not so to pass because God had determined, decreed and foreseen infallibly, that Adam should beget this wicked Wretch, nor decreed, nor infallibly foreseen of God. How God forsook the Malignity of Cain, and how it came to pass.

XVII.
Cain and
his Wicked-
ness were
neither de-
termin'd,
nor decreed,

Chap. V. Wretch, and that God had destin'd him to commit all the ill he did, to Fratricide, and then to Damnation, either by so decreeing it, and of a thing merely possible as it was before, making it infallibly future; or by withdrawing his Assistance and Grace: at least to such a degree as was necessary to enable him to conquer his Temptations; or lastly, by rendering the Event of these things necessary by his infallible Foresight of them. This is all mere Error and Mistake. The Truth is this, That God did foresee that *Adam* might beget good or ill Children according as he dispos'd himself, and as he bred them up, and as the Children when of Age should afterwards determine their Liberty: That God did all he possibly could that the Good he saw as possible might really and actually exist, and the Ill which he saw too as possible might never actually fall out: That *Adam* and his Wife not having sufficiently watch'd over themselves, nor follow'd the Inspirations of God's good Spirit, nor the Suggestions of the good Angels, nor the Blessings and the pure Order of Nature at the time when they begat *Cain*, *Cain* (their Fruit) was (against the Will of God) as it were naturally rooted in a State just as corrupt as was then the State of his Parents; that is to say, in such an one wherein on one hand the good Spirit (objectively present to his Interior) offer'd to him its Light and good Motions, as did proportionately also the good Angels and the good things of Nature; but wherein on the other hand, the Corruption of his own Heart, in Conjunction with his original and as it were habitual Inclination, did much divert him from this good Principle, and turn'd him towards himself, towards the Suggestions of the Devil, and towards the Corruption of Nature; and this his Disposition being grown strong by a remiss Education, when the Child came to the Age of Understanding and the use of his Liberty, it produced those wicked Fruits contrary to the Will of God.

XVIII.

God deny'd
Cain no-
thing that
might
make him
shun the
Evil and do the Good.

XVIII. And so far was God from destinating *Cain* to his wicked Actions and to his Damnation, or from determining him to them, or necessitating him either by Decree, or by withdrawing or refusing his Grace, or by infallible Foreknowledge; that the quite contrary

is true, that he design'd him for Vertue and for Life E- Chap. V.
 ternal, that he refus'd him nothing conducive to this End, and that he Endeavour'd by his Divine Power all that could be done without violating his Liberty, that the Evil which he foresaw concerning Cain in consequence of his evil Habits, as morally certain and future, might never actually come to pass, as I have already shewn this to be the chief Aim of the Divine Prescience concerning Evil. It was Cain alone who of his own pure Choice and free Will made the Event thereof morally and physically certain by the commission and confirmation of his own voluntary Acts, that were contrary to the ardent Desire and Will of his God. It was he alone that resisted the Light, the Desires, the good Motions, the Inspirations (and those extraordinary) of the Holy Spirit, of the good Angels, and of the other Creatures (as what is good in them is the Voice of God) to hearken to and follow the bent of his corrupt Heart, the Desires and Suggestions of the Devil, the Disorders of his Passions and of corporeal Nature; by doing which he unhappily gave Certainty and Existence to the Fruits of his Heart, which was united to the Spirit of the Devil and the Corruption of Nature; which Fruits the Holy Spirit had so earnestly wish'd to prevent and extinguish by his Foresight, by his Graces, and Remonstrances, so graciously saying to him when he saw him in Danger (a), *Why art thou displeased, and why is thy Countenance fallen? if thou doest well shall not thy Oblation be accepted? but if thou wilt not do well sin lies at the door, and it is toward thee that its Inclinations and Desires look* (to get the full Consent of thy Will, and to draw thy Liberty on their side) *but thou shouldest govern and rule over them.* Would not God, the Source of all Goodness, and Truth, and Sincerity, cruelly and deceitfully have mock'd Cain in thus speaking to him, if it were true that all was fatally fix'd and necessitated by his Decrees, by his Prescience, by his Determination, and by an Ill Will to deny him the Graces he might have bestowed upon him, and that were necessary for avoiding a Sin which he commanded him to avoid, whilst he refus'd him the only means by which it was possible for him to avoid it? The Fraud of the most

(a) Gen. 4. 7.

Chap. V. most cruel Hypocrites in the World could scarce arise to such a pitch, even against their mortal Enemies.

XIX. *God gave to Cain such Grace as that he might easily have resisted the Evil if he would.*

XIX. God was pleas'd not only to assist *Cain* so far as to enable him to abstain from Ill and be saved, but did effectually help him to such a degree that it depended now upon *Cain* alone to do well, and it was very possible and very easy for him to do so, provided he would have given up his consent to God's drawing of him, and have turn'd himself towards the good Spirit that call'd him; or rather, had he not turn'd himself away from them to hearken to the Devil, who, as *St. John* after our Blessed Saviour observes, had a great hand in the Murder of his Brother. But how was this possible, may some say, seeing from his very Birth, either by reason of his ill Education, or of the ill Habits he had already contracted before he slew his Brother, the Devil had now got more the ascendant over him than the good Spirit of God? Yes, notwithstanding all these Inconveniences, this was very possible for him, had he but stood firm to the Grace of God and to the Holy Spirit who does also inspire us, and not given any reflex heed to any of the Suggestions of the Devil or corrupt Nature. For tho' the Devil seconded by the Corruption of our Heart, of our Body, and of Nature, has more Power and Credit with us than the Good Spirit of God, yet is the Spirit of God more Powerful than the Devil, than our and Nature's Corruption: for he is Omnipotent; and when we turn towards him, we feel in our selves with Admiration and Joy the Effects of his Omnipotence against the Devil, against the Corruption of Nature, and against our own: and we see that by little and little the Devil with all his Stratagems leave our Soul, and at last all these Enemies vanish and melt at the Presence of God, like Wax before the Fire, when he is pleas'd to shew himself in a Heart that entirely opens and resigns it self to him.

XX. *A Deduction of the manner how Cain and others might have resisted the Devil.*

XX. Whoever should go about to resist the Inspirations, Temptations and Motions of the Devil within him by his own Strength, his own Endeavours and Motions, would be so far from effecting it that he would only increase his Confusion and Darkeness. To do this, a Man must turn away his Soul from all the diabolical Images and Motions, and turn towards God his Desire empty

empty of every thing else but a hearty Wish for his Chap. V.
 Holy Grace. Then the Divine Light, that pressed up-
 on the door of the Soul, breaks into it and mixes it
 self with her Faculties and Acts: and the Tendencies
 of its divine Rays being straight, pure and uniform,
 they do by their Rectitude stop and set right the Boil-
 ings and irregular Motions raised by the Devil. 'Tis
 well known that any hot and boiling Liquor grows
 calm and cool being exposed to the Rays of the Sun;
 and that the Flame of a Fire loses much of its Force
 in them; the Reason is this, the Rays of the Sun
 piercing these Objects in straight Lines and after a fixt
 and constant manner, the Rectitude and uniform Firm-
 ness of 'em stops the confused and stragling Motions of
 the Liquor and Flame when exposed to 'em. A fair
 Emblem this of the manner how the good Spirit of
 God extinguishes in us the Temptations and Force of
 the Devil. The Will of the Devil can not sympa-
 thise with the Rectitude and Straightness of the Light,
 for his Element is Confusion and Darknes: and so,
 as soon as he finds this bright Rectitude which he does
 by feeling his Element grow fixt by the simple and di-
 rect Penetration of the Divine Light, to which the
 Sinner exposes his Soul, he quits that Soul with
 Shame; for he can neither abide nor overcome the
 Light. The Action of the Light (which is God himself)
 being stronger than the Devil, he sees he shall be con-
 quered by it, besides that the Sentiment of it is horri-
 bly painful and tormenting to him. Therefore it
 is that he is put to flight and routed by the Light of
 Faith, and all his fiery Darts and Efforts rebound
 back upon himself alone, and pierce him with Fury
 and Rage.

XXI. This is to be understood when the Soul con-
 sents, and perseveres so to do, to the continuance of
 the Light of God within her, and continues in the
 Aversion and Abhorrence of the Efforts of Satan, who
 does not quit his hold for the first Repulse. But if
 after some little Resistance the Soul gives way and
 hearkens to the Imaginations and Motions of the
 Devil instead of turning away from them, then the
 Devil returns stronger, and the Light of God cannot
 enter

XXI. That
 to effect
 this, the
 continual
 Consent of
 the Soul to
 the Action
 of God is
 requisite;
 without
 which the
 Soul.

Devil gets the better of the Light of God in the

Chap. V. enter into the Soul there to work and assist it: because the Divine Operation would then be overcome and polluted; which is what God will never endure. I say the direct Operation of God would be overcome and polluted; because there can never be any thing in a resigning Degree in the Soul but by the Consent of the Liberty. It was God's Pleasure nothing should enter the Soul but that Way, no not himself, for Reasons elsewhere given.

XX. *How the Devil becomes prevalent in the Soul, and that yet it has the Liberty to hear God.*

XXII. If therefore the Consent of the Will is turned towards the Devil and towards his Suggestions and Motions, the Devil becomes then predominant in the Soul and drives God out of it, who is constrained to stand without at the door and there knock for a season; which he does during this Life, all which time the Soul is free to lend an ear and give its Consent to God knocking without, or to the Devil though he be already posselt and strongly reigning within, as in *Cain*.

XXIII. *How Men may give way to the Devil, or to God to conquer the Devil.*

XXIII. It was his Business, and is still ours and every Man's, to see which we will join with, God or the Devil. We are all of us encompassed and beset with these two Spirits. If we turn our selves toward the Motions of the Devil, as the Inclinations of our Hearts and of our corrupt Nature are, then we joyn and co-operate with the Devil and strengthen him; but if we renounce the Motions of our Corruption, which are the Vehicles of the Will and Power of Satan, and turn our selves towards God, casting the Eyes of our Soul upon him, then we open to him the door and co-operate with him, who comes to subdue and destroy in us the Works of the Devil. *The Son of God appears even then spiritually to destroy the Works of the Devil; for that is his Business according to the Scripture (a).*

(a) *Jo. 3.8.*

XXIV. *The Devil enters into Man by means of such Creatures as he sets his Affections upon: how he is driven out of the Soul wherein he reigns.*

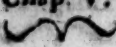
XXIV. We have here, to make this very useful Remark by the by, we have here I say, one Reason of that Mortification, Self denial and Abstinence, and Poverty of Spirit enjoined in the Gospel; because there is in all the Creatures and our Commerce with them and our selves some Corruption and Part of the Element of Satan, the Motions of which Corruption are subject

subject to his Will: the Snares of the Devil are laid Chap. V. and hidden every where, in our eating and drinking, in all our Actions, in walking, speaking, resting, acting, imagining, &c. so that as soon as the Soul is turned away from its Attention and Desire of God, and turned with its Affection and Consent towards any thing of Nature, the Devil does through and with this thing enter in triumph into the Soul, and there builds himself a Tower and Cittadel of Brass by the evil Habits that are bred in the Soul. After which the Devil and his Element being so rooted in the Soul, it costs much Pains to tear them thence. Yet still, one stronger than he may come and disarm and expel him: for the Soul being free to give her Consent to God, who presents himself to her and calls her; if she do so, the Word, the Son of God, the Light of the Soul, comes and acts so powerfully, so constantly, so directly in her by the Rectitude and Purity of his Divine Motions, as has been said, that this by little and little unravels and disturbs all the Motions of the Devil even unto the most inward Recesses of them; and Satan seeing himself discover'd and stop'd, cannot any longer keep his Hold. He must be forc'd at last to direct his Attack elsewhere, and being able no longer to manage his Element in Man, he leaves him and spits his Venom somewhere else, where he may be out of Danger of exposing his Shame and his Fithiness to the Rays of the Divine Light, there to be conquer'd and put to flight.

XXV. And so the most powerful and effectual means to overcome the Devil, not to say the only one, is, not to engage him directly, by considering his Temptations, by weighing them, and formally opposing Acts to Acts, or Thoughts to Thoughts; but to turn away both from them and from the Corruption of our own Hearts, and from the Motions of our corrupt Nature, which are certainly devilish, and in league with those of the Devil, and are indeed their Vehicle and Door; and to turn our selves towards the Spirit of God, looking always on him as intimately present with us and ready to work in our Souls, if we keep them in repose and waiting before him. All this has been said upon

H occasion may ob-
serve the Conduct of Providence towards all Men.

XXV. The
most effe-
ctual
Means to
overcome
the Devil.
In the Ex-
amples of
Adam, of
Cain and
Abel, of
Seth and
his Poste-
rity, we

Chap. V.  occasion of the Person of *Cain* and his Corruption, and of the manner how the Devil tempted him, how he might and ought to have resisted him by the Help afforded him of God, and how he was overcome; and we must at the same time apply this to all Men; because in effect my Aim in speaking of *Adam*, and *Cain*, and by and by of *Abel*, and *Seth*, and their Posterity in general is, that what I shall say upon these four or five Examples, may serve to explain the whole Conduct of Divine Providence towards all Men in all Times and in all Cases: for these four or five may serve for all.

For in *Adam* may be consider'd those that are as it were yet wavering or ballancing, not having yet fully determin'd or habituated themselves to Good or Evil.

In his Children of different Tempers may be observ'd the rise of the Inequality of Men from their Birth and from their Youth, though God on his part provides equally and impartially for all.

In *Cain* may be mark'd the Conduct of Divine Providence toward the Wicked, either before they commit their Crimes, or when they are committing them, or after they have committed them.

In *Abel* we shall see how this Divine Providence deals with holy and regenerate Persons, even when they are afflicted and cruelly tormented and kill'd.

In *Seth*, and in some Events that befell his Posterity, we shall see how God deals with such good Men as are not so far advanc'd in Vertue as *Abel*, and with their Posterity; that is to say, with all Men, who since the Deluge are the Descendants of good *Seth* and good *Noah*. Let's go on therefore with what we have to say in the matter of *Cain*.

C H A P. VI.

Of God's Providence in the Permission, Direction, and Conduct of the Sins of the Wicked.

I.  O D having foreseen Cain's Fratricide, I. *The Permission of* and that on purpose to prevent it, made *mission of* use of such Means as I said, *viz. the* Cain's Sin. Inspirations and Motions of his Holy Spirit, of his good Angels and his other Blessings, and indeed of the visible Presence, or at least of the sensible Words of *Jesus Christ* to this wretched Creature. But as he would freely persevere in his wicked Purpose, and yield to the Instigations of the Devil, not regarding the Bars God had set to his Wickedness on all sides, God left off fencing him any longer, and permitted him the use of his Liberty and of his other free Powers. And this Consent of God's that a Sinner should have the free use of his natural Powers, is what is commonly with respect to God, but very improperly, call'd, THE PERMISSION OF SIN.

II. I have (a) elsewhere said something concerning this Permission, but not enough for the full Understanding of this Matter. II. *God's Permission does not*

Neither the Permission of God, nor generally any *directly respect the Ill,* Act of God can directly respect what is Evil. God *but there is al and natural use of our Liberty.* can do nothing actively nor permissively, that is to say, he cannot exert an Act of Permission, in virtue and consequence of which Evil directly comes to pass. Every Act of God's aims only at Good, at Reality and Position: and were Men wise they would never consider Evil under any direct Relation to God; but only (a) *Oec. Chap. VI.* indirectly, as thus; Man directly and of his own head of Sin, will do Ill; and God having found it in vain to have laid Restraints upon his wicked Will, or to endeavour it any longer, consents he should act freely, upon which Man does as he pleases; but what he wills is not Evil but only from the Evil of his Liberty and his Heart, and not in virtue and by reason of God's Permission

Chap. VI. mission, which respects only a naturally real thing, viz. Man's Liberty and its free Act: and besides, God does outwardly direct these wicked Actions so far as they may concern the Good, nay and the Wicked too, as long as they are capable of amendment: and this is what I will more distinctly explain

III. *A more particular
Explication of this
Matter.
What the
Divine
Permission
is. The
ground of
the present
Difficulty.*

III. God's PERMISSION is originally, a Consent that the Creatures should use the Powers and Faculties he has given them: so that with respect to Man it is a Divine Consent that Man should make use of the natural Gifts of his Liberty, Understanding, Will, Imagination, Senses, of the Members and Motions of his Body, and of the Creatures of the Universe. Now as the use of all these could not but be very good in it self, if his Liberty did but conduct it self aright; so there is no difficulty to understand how God might, and really did give him the Permission of all this: but his Liberty not being ty'd nor destin'd to any certain and proper Objects, as his other Faculties were, but having a general Inspection over all things to dispose of them at Pleasure; it might easily so happen that his Liberty might order things, use and apply them after another manner, a shorter or longer time, than the Nature and the End of Things and of his Faculties required. And this would have been Evil; that is, a thing opposite and contrary to the Purpose and Will of God in creating the Faculties of Man and Objects to suit them. Hence arises the Difficulty concerning the Divine Permission. 'Tis ask'd therefore, whether God can permit the Will to be carry'd to Evil?

IV. *How
God does
not permit
Evil.*

IV. There is in the Liberty its physical and its moral Act. The physical Act respects the Principle; and the moral, the End and the Objects. The physical Act is the Liberty's turning its Consent to what side it pleases at its own Choice; and this is not naturally Evil; God permits this and never takes it either from Angels, Men or Devils. The moral Act as to Evil, is this, the Liberty's turning away of its Consent and of its Divine Faculties from God and his Will: and this is what God never permits: 'tis in this Sense that God never permits Sin; that is to say, God never gives his Consent that the Liberty should turn away its Consent and its Divine Faculties from him and his Divine Will:

Will: and 'tis in this Sense the Scripture says expres- Chap. VI.
ly: (a) *God hath given no Man Permission to Sin*; or he (a) *Ecclesi.*
has permitted none to do Evil: or if you'll have it in 15. 20.
other Passages, (b) *Thou art a God that willest not Iniquity.* (b) *Psal.*
(c) *Thou hast Eyes too pure to behold Evil.* What 5. 5.
is it then that God does in the Matter of Evil, as to (c) *Habak.*
the Permission or Non-permission of it? It is this. 1. 13.

V. (1.) *First*, When he foresees, or sees Evil, that is, when he sees that the Liberty turns away its Consent and its Faculties from him and from their true Objects, and when it turns them toward others in an undue Manner; and will put this in Execution outwardly by the Powers that move the Body, God does disapprove infinitely of all this, and wills and desires with the sincerest Ardor and with infinite Efforts that this may never be; or if it be already, that it may not continue, but the contrary may come to pass. V. *The Conduct of Providence in the Event of Evil. What his Permission properly is.*

(2.) *Secondly*, God wills not, nor has he been pleas'd to take to him the Power to force the Liberty, or to take from it the Power to will and to do what lies in it.

(3.) *But thirdly*, because he knows Man in such a State is blind, misled by his own Darkness and Corruption and by the Devil, and that he may turn himself another way were he but inform'd that what he is going to do is not good; for this end, God without directly touching his Liberty, strikes his Mind and his Heart with Light and good Motions, his Eyes and his Ears with good Representations, and by Words of Exhortation, Promises and Threatnings; he lays inward and outward Restraints in his way that his Faculties should not execute what his Liberty has commanded 'em; and thus he extraordinarily and almost in a supernatural and miraculous way stops their Acts and their Functions.

(4.) *But fourthly*, when notwithstanding all this Man's Liberty will go on to turn away it self and its Faculties from God and his Will, then God ceases to oppose him any longer, and removes or rather discontinues the Obstacles he had laid in his way, and permits that the Liberty and its Faculties should without all let do what it wills: and this is *Permission* as to Evil.

VI. In this Permission, for tho' God sees that this Physical Act is like to be the Subject of an horrible Depravation and Pollution, yet his Permission or his Divine Consent respects not this Depravation or this Sin; on the contrary, God infinitely disapproves it, he infinitely wills to do his utmost to hinder it, except by violating the Liberty, and continually exposing to no purpose his Graces to a resolvedly desperate Heart: for God cannot will these two things, viz. continually to expose his Graces to the Contempt of such as are voluntarily wicked, nor to force their Liberty, which he has immutably and primitively resolv'd and consented to give them to last for ever. It would be absurd and contradictory to attribute these two things to God. This is the solid and essential Truth concerning the Permission of Evil, as it relates to God.

VI. This Permission respects only the Physical Act: for tho' God sees that this Physical Act is like to be the Subject of an horrible Depravation and Pollution, yet his Permission or his Divine Consent respects not this Depravation or this Sin; on the contrary, God infinitely disapproves it, he infinitely wills to do his utmost to hinder it, except by violating the Liberty, and continually exposing to no purpose his Graces to a resolvedly desperate Heart: for God cannot will these two things, viz. continually to expose his Graces to the Contempt of such as are voluntarily wicked, nor to force their Liberty, which he has immutably and primitively resolv'd and consented to give them to last for ever. It would be absurd and contradictory to attribute these two things to God. This is the solid and essential Truth concerning the Permission of Evil, as it relates to God.

VII. How God directs and governs Sin by his Providence.

(a) Supr. s 2.

VII. When I say God suffers our Liberty to do and cause to be done by its outward and inward Powers such Acts as it will *without hindrance*, this has yet its Exception, as well in relation to the Wicked as to the Good, as I have already hinted (a). As to the Wicked, we must know that as their Heart is a continual Source of Iniquity, which incessantly casts out in great Streams its empoison'd Waters, and is like a great Fire that throws out and increases its Flames *in infinitum*; when God sees they are fully bent to Sin, and that yet there is some Hope they may return to a sound Mind, this Good God does not withdraw all the Obstacles he had placed in their way both internally and externally to stop the Course and Intention of their Actions, but he does no longer continue to set more, or at least he does no longer cast up Banks universally and on all sides against their evil Actions, but only on some. And hence it is that the Evil overflows on one side rather than another. And this, with respect to God is called, *The DIRECTION or GOVERNMENT of SIN*. These are the Obstacles which the good Providence of God casts in the way on some sides against the immortal Source of the Diabolical Corruption which is in the Heart of Man, and it is from these Obstacles that the Waters of this infernal Spring flow and break over on one side rather than on another.

VIII. Did

VIII. Did not *Jesus Christ* hope that this Fountain VIII. *Why*
 might yet diminish and even quite dry up; or were it *Jesus Christ*
 by it self and had no Commerce with the Good, he *sets Bars to*
 would leave it alone to it self without casting up any *the Sins of*
 Bank at all against it (as he will the damned, and in- *the Wicked*
 deed the Men of the last Days, when Evil shall have its *on some*
 full Swing, as soon as he has separated the Good from *sides and*
 among them;) but that he sees, should he universally *not on o-*
 damm up the external Eruption of the Malice of the *thers.*
 Wicked, that in such a Case they would thereby be-
 come more corrupt, more enraged, more hardned in
 their Hearts, more hypocritical and deceitful outward-
 ly; he would doubtless hinder them by universal Ob-
 stacles from producing any Evil outwardly. But he
 does it not but lets their Malice flow freely on some
 sides; 1. because he knows that by letting it break
 forth outwardly, this will give vent to some part of
 their Rage and Malignity, and that this may be of use
 to them to give them some Remorse, Horrour and
 Contempt of themselves when they shall see palpably
 by their outward Commissions the abominable Deform-
 ity of that which they knew not so long as it was
 shut up within their Hearts only; and that so this
 may serve to bring them to Repentance: again 2. be-
 cause God sees among these wicked persons some
 others both evil and good that deserve Punishment and
 some strokes of his Rod: 3. lastly, because God sees
 some righteous and holy Persons to whom he knows
 these outward Evils of the Wicked will prove Occasi-
 ons of Good, of Salvation and Glory. You see here
 three Reasons and three Effects for the sake of which
 God does not set general Bars to the Malice of the Wicked,
 but lets it run over on such sides as he judges most
 proper to produce the best and the most saving Effects.

By the first of these three Cases may be decided that
 Question, why God sometimes permits the Evil of the
 Wicked to be confined within their own Breasts only,
 and sometimes that it spread outwardly, and why God
 suffers Sinners to effect their wicked Purposes.

By the second, is seen, why God suffers the Chastise-
 ments and Punishments Men inflict one upon another.

And by the third, why God suffers Holy Men to be
 afflicted, even to a cruel Death by the Wicked.

Chap. VI. I don't stay, as you see, to explain all the Passages nor the particular Cases wherewith the Scripture furnishes us. This would be endless nor to any great Purpose. It seems to me much better to give (as I endeavour to do) a general Key, that may serve to explain all particular Instances. To render the Application of this to all Cases more easie I will instance in the Murder of *Cain*, and shew how it came to pass by God's Permission.

IX. An
Applicati-
on of this
Divine
Conduct to
Cain's Fra-
tricide. The
Justice,
Wisdom
and Good-
ness of God
herein.

IX. *Cain* was a wicked Person whose wicked Will God would not force after having endeavoured by all means to win it. He saw he persisted in it, that he inwardly encreased his devilish Rage and Corruption, and that nevertheless this wicked Wretch, under the Pretext that his Wickedness did not appear outwardly, would needs play the Hypocrite and Religious, act the Priest and even (by a strange Blindness of Heart) prefer himself in Holiness to righteous *Abel*. God saw, that should he remove the Banks he had raised against this envenomed Source, or should he not still cast up new ones, and that so the Infection should empty itself without, this might lessen the Rage of this wicked Man, and bring him to know himself; that it might make him afraid and abhor both himself and his Wickedness, and so dispose him to repent. And besides, God saw that *Adam* and *Eve* had set their Affections too much upon this Sort of theirs, and had bred him up loosely; and that they had treated *Abel* too slightly (or if any one will out of a spirit of Contradiction oppose me in that) too fondly. This deserved Punishment. As to the Person of righteous *Abel*, of whom the World, was not worthy, God's Will was to reward and glorifie him eternally. What does God now in this Case? He sees that the breaking out of *Cain's* Malice may bring about all these good Aims. But for this End he does not take away all the Barriers that were placed against the Stream of the poisoned Fountain of this wicked Man's Heart; he does not break down the Damms on all sides. For, alas! had he done so, *Cain* would no question have killed Father and Mother, Brothers and Sisters, and all he could have found then in the World, and would have made an Hell of the Earth: for what may not

a wicked Man do that is hurried by the Instigations of the Devil, and utterly forsaken of God? God therefore puts Rubs and Restraints to *Cain's* Rage and to the Devil's in him; he lays Restraints I say upon him on many sides, as to *Adam* and *Eve*, and as to other Persons and Objects, and so secures them from him, but, as to *Abel*, he leaves him an open Field: upon which *Cain* and the Devil send out the Torrent of their Rage on this side, and thus by God's Permission kill this innocent Lamb. Upon this abominable Murder of his Brother, *Cain* bethinks himself, renounces his Hypocrisy, abhors himself, quakes and is humbled, and it may be, becomes truly penitent, and at last works out his Salvation: for Men are too rash and too free in damning, as commonly they do, this poor Sinner. How do they know but he repented and found Mercy? One thing is certain, He might have so done, and that God offered him his Grace during his life. But, they say, he killed his Brother. He did; but did not *David* kill many more when he exposed to Dearth a band of his faithful Subjects that he might with them be sure to slay the brave and the just *Uriah*, and so hide the detestable Injury he had done him by debauching his Wife? But the Scripture says he did repent, and so it does not of *Cain*. 'Tis true; but neither does it say he did not. And so let us not condemn him, but leave him to God's Judgment. This is certain, that by God's Grace, his Fall might have been to him an occasion of humbling himself, and of his Repentance to Salvation; whereas before, the same Grace of God without his Fall could not work such an Effect upon him through his Pride and sottish Presumption. By this same Fratricide behold *Adam* and *Eve* punished and chastened as they deserved, who doubtless grew wiser upon it. By the same too, was righteous *Abel* rewarded and crowned, the World deprived of what it no longer deserved, and Posterity saw in him a lively and saving Example of Resignation, Meekness, and Patience, and how they were to behave themselves savingly and according to God's Will in the like Case,

X. This

X. How we
may and
ought to
receive E-
vils as
coming
from God's
Hand.

An Exam-
ple of this
in Abel.

(a) Job. 2.
so.

X. This wonderful Direction of God in regard of Evil, is the Reason why the Scripture speaks sometimes after such a manner as if it were God himself that did or directly caused evil Actions to be done; and how we are to receive 'em as coming from his hand.

I will propose an Example or two of this kind, which may serve us to explain all other particular Modes of Speech in Scripture relating to this Matter. I might alledge the Example and Authority of *Job* (a), *shall we not receive Evil as well as Good at God's hand?* But to stick to *Abel*, 'tis certain, though it be not expressly said so in Scripture, that he received his Death as if God had with his own Hand inflicted it on him, or as if *Cain* had been the Instrument in God's Hand to kill him: not that *Abel* thought it was God inspir'd him with this murd'rous Rage and Hatred against him, or that he had decreed to inspire him with it, and then by a Physical and infallible Influence, having before by his Decree dispos'd him to it, push'd on and actuated the Thought and the Bodily Powers of *Cain*, to make things go as they did by lending him his *precurfus* and *concurfus*, and according to other blind Men, by producing himself immediately all the Reality, and all the Determination that was either in the Soul or Body of *Cain*. CURSED THOUGHTS these! *Abel* saw and knew by the Divine Light that *Cain* was free to think and to move as he pleas'd, having absolutely and for ever receiv'd of God this Gift, without needing either preventing or concurring Help, or any re-iterated Preservation, or any other School-Whimsy, which troubled not the World till many Ages after. He saw likewise that God had done all that he possibly could to take from him his wicked and malicious Purpose, and that hitherto he had of his pure Grace laid all sorts of Obstacles in his way; but that he was not oblig'd, after having since the Fall put things in the State before-mentioned, still to give again and again new Assistance to the Wicked, who, far from answering the end of the first, had only abus'd it; and thus, *Abel* saw, that God would but too much have expos'd his Divine Graces, and the more have harden'd *Cain* in his Wickedness, had he always restrain'd him by extraordinary Methods, and us'd Violence towards him to hinder him from

from being free to do ill. *Abel* could not desire such a thing of God; and though he were a righteous Man, and had done *Cain* no Wrong to be thus cruelly butcher'd by him, yet he consider'd; he had sinn'd against God, and deserv'd to be chasten'd; and besides that, he was in a miserable Life, which it was good to be deliver'd out of. The first of these Considerations gave him to understand that it was just that God, who sent in *Cain's* Wickedness to keep it from breaking out, should no more do so, or not continue to do it any longer as to him; but that he should leave the course of it free, if not on all sides, yet towards him to chasten him for his Sins. The Second Consideration made him look upon this Torrent of Death, as I may say, as a Favour of God to free him from his Prison. Thus it is that good Men receive the Evil of the Wicked, as Effects of God's Justice and Goodness.

The Scripture is express herein upon an Occasion where mention is made only of Punishment. 'Tis when God made it be told *David* after his Sin (a), I will raise up Evil against thee out of thine own House: I will take away thy Wives from before thine Eyes, and will give them to thy Servant, and he shall sleep with them in the face of the Sun: For thou didst this thing secretly, but I will do it before all Israel and before the Sun. The meaning of which we know was this, that *Abfalom* should publicly violate his Father's Concubines. And why does the Scripture speak thus? Is it to teach us that God had predestinated *Abfalom* to rebel and commit Incest, and that these Women of *David* were destin'd by an immutable and eternal Decree to be violated, and that when it was time God would be the disposing and acting Principle in all these Motions and in all these Determinations, both in their Minds and in their Bodies? I know not what Degree of Blindness and Folly Men must have arriv'd to if they continue any longer in such odd Thoughts. It was God's Will to save and cure *Abfalom* as well as any other Man; but he not being willing to be cur'd, and the Fountain of his Corruption striving to flow out on all sides, God restrains it and opposes Mounds against it on this side and t'other, but not on the side of *David* and his Concubines, because *David* had made himself unworthy of God's Protection

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Another Example
how God
directs and
sends Evil.

(a) 2 Sam.
12, 11, 13.

Chap. VI tection on that side. And so, *Abalom*, who but for the Obstacles and Restraints put upon him by God, would have spread the Effects of his Rage, of his Luxury, and of all the Motions which the Devil, and the Corruption of his own Heart and of the World could have inspir'd him with, being curb'd on all sides but on his Father's; which God by an Effect of his Justice would not secure, commits those Crimes which the Prophet had from God threatned *David* with, in such Terms as signifie to this Purpose; "There is in thy House an obstinate Wretch, whose Wickedness I have as yet kept from breaking out and bearing down all before it: but for the future I will not resist his Malice as to what concerns thy Crown, thy Bed, and thine Honour: so that he not finding himself restrain'd by me in those Points, will there commit all his Ravages. This is God's I WILL DO, which is as much as to say, I will not curb the Efforts of his Corruption on such and such sides, and then there it will break out.

A Third Example.

(a) 2 Sam. 16. 10.

Likewise when *David* said of *Shimei* that cursed him, (a) Let him curse, for the Lord hath said unto him, Curse *David*; this, THE LORD HATH SAID, signifies just what the I WILL DO did, in the Threatning of God by the Mouth of the Prophet *Nathan*; that is to say, it signifies, that God would not hinder the Production of *Shimei*'s voluntary Malice as to his Tongue; so far as concern'd *David*'s Person, who considering herein the Justice of the Permission and Conduct of God, received it as a Punishment inflicted on him by God for his Offences, humbled himself, and gave an Example of Humility and Patience to others, as well as of Punishment, to deter Men from Sin. There are other Fruits that proceed from this Divine Permission, even with respect to those that Sin: but I shall pass by them, seeing we have already seen the like in the Case of *Cain*'s Murder.

XI Reasons of Types and Figures as well in Ill as in Good Things.

XI. It must be further observed from these Obstacles which God sets to the breaking out of Corruption, that as God may, if he pleases, suffer the wilful Corruption of Man to overflow outwardly on all sides or to stop it on all sides, or only on such sides as he shall think fit; it hence follows, that God knowing the wilful and habitual Obstinacy and Malice of one or more

more Subjects, easily foresees and foretels the manner Chap. VI. of their sinning outwardly, or their wicked Actions. For as he sees in general, that unless he threw up Mounds against the Torrent of their corrupt Heart, it would overflow on all sides, so likewise he foresees that if he stop it on such sides, to such a degree, and at such a time, and does not on other sides, then it will break loose just so far, and so will do Mischief to such and such Persons. Again, if God please to resist the Eruption of the Malignity of the Wicked, that shall live toward the End of the World, if he be pleased to hinder or not to hinder it, and to proceed in his Methods of setting or removing Obstacles, by regular and uniform Ways, observing constantly some certain Ways and Means, keeping certain Measures justly proportioned to each other, such as his Wisdom and Justice shall suggest to him, in this case, the breaking out of the Malice of the Wicked in Former Ages will be directed, restrained, or break out in a Manner very near that of the Wicked of after-times; that is to say, the Life and outward Behaviour of the Wicked of the First Times, will be Figures of the Life and Actions of the Wicked Men of the Last Times, and the one will be Types of the other. So likewise in respect of the Good, if God be pleased to give good Men in all times his Assistance and Grace by such Ways and Rules as shall bear proportion and likeness the one with the other, which he will observe for Reasons known to himself; in this case, the good Men of the First Ages, their Graces, their Favours, their Behaviour, will be Types of good Men of the Latter Days. Here you see another Fundamental Reason of Types (not to say of Predictions) on which I made no Reflection when I spake of Types and Figures elsewhere^(a). I desire what I have said there may not be taken for a full Explication of that Point, exclusively of what is said here.

XII. Another Remark, by which we may understand what *Fortune* and *Chance* is, is this, that the Divine Direction of Sin being free, God does guide and order it diverse ways. Should God leave a corrupt and obstinately wicked Heart to it self and the Devil that possesses it, without setting any Fence or Damm

(a) See Oecon. of the Restor. before the Incarn. Ch. 17. § 2.

XII. What Fortune & Chance is; as well in Good Things as in Ill.

TO

Chap. VI. to the Inundation of its Corruption, it would indeed throw its Corruption about without any distinction on all sides, but not all at a time, but now on this side and then on t'other; so that outwardly now this Object then that would be assaulted and annoyed by it. And here would be no certain Rules observed; but it would fall out sometimes here, sometimes there, at all adventure: because the Heart of corrupt Man and his Accomplice the Devil are Principles of Inconstancy and Change; who finding solid Quiet no where, they are always changing their Courses and Postures. It is true the Constitution of Body, and the Influences of the Stars may somewhat fix and determine them; but besides that there is nothing so precisely determined but yet has in it thousands of particular Modes of acting free and undetermined; besides too, that the Liberty of Man and of the Devil, can, absolutely speaking, carry them against all sorts of outward Impressions, it is these very external Impressions, in conjunction with the indeterminate Corruption of Man and the Devil, (whom we suppose to have no particular Restraints laid on them) that make just those Events which we call fortuitous and of *Chance*; in matter of Ill; as in things materially good or indifferent we call *good Fortune or Chance*, such Events as God and his Angels leave to be produced by the Influences of Nature according to her general and ordinary Course, without any particular Determination to certain individuals, who yet are advantaged by them, not in Virtue of any special Determination either of God or his Angels, but only of the general course of Nature, still accompanied with the general Blessing of God, and subjected to the general Care of the Angels.

XIII. Men XIII. Now according as God sees Men more or less
are differently more obstinately and maliciously wicked, and as they are
or less under God's more or less mixt with others more or less good; and
special Direction, and so, according as he foresees that the Obstacles he should
more or less set to the outward overflowing of their Malignity
subjected to the fortui- would have fewer or more Effects or Consequences
ous Course of Nature. either to the good or the bad, he accordingly lays in
 their way more or fewer Obstacles to restrain them
 more or less, and he abandons them more or less inde-
 terminately to the course of their inconstant Passions
 and

and of Nature: so that it is very true that the whole Conduct of Men is not alike under the special Direction of God nor his Angels, nor equally abandoned to the casual and fortuitous Guidance of Nature; but there is more and less, yea and nay, as God sees it just, good, and convenient. A wicked Person that chances to live among good Men, or is come of good Ancestors to whom God has made great Promises, or is one for whom there are many Prayers made, shall be more under the particular Direction and Government of God and his Angels, and much less exposed to purely natural Events, than another less wicked Man that lives either by himself, or with such as himself, or that has none of these Advantages above-mentioned. I suppose the Reader plainly sees the necessary connexion of these Truths with their Principles without my needing to be perpetually running from Link to Link to the very first to shew the Proof of them *a priori* to such as are not of Capacity to view the whole System at once. But to give the Proof of them *a posteriori* and inartificially, 'tis upon these Truths, that all the Prayers of Men concerning outward things, and likewise all the Promises and Threatnings of God about the special Care he will take to do in such a Case such and such good things, and to keep off such and such Evils, to watch over the outward Affairs of some and to desert others; if it were not for the Truth of what I have just now been speaking, all these things would be useless, bottomed upon Falsity, and even ridiculous, superstitious and deceitful. The Consequence is evident enough to all but such as will not see, and I don't intend to lose my labour by going about to make them see that are resolved to shut their Eyes. Every Man may, for me, both here and in other things, be clear-sighted or blind at his own Peril, nor will I give my self any great trouble, to make them speak or hold their peace, much less to answer all the trifling Cavils of every ignorant Objecter against what I have said upon this or other Subjects. 'Tis Cain and his Sin that has given me occasion to say what has been said upon this Head: let us continue our Reflections upon him; for we shall by that means see how God's Providence deals with all Sinners and their Race.

XIV. *Unequal Posterity descending from the same Stock.*

XIV. What has been said above concerning *Adam*, that God did not destine nor determine him to beget just such a Number of Children, some whereof were predestinated to Life, to Probity of Manners, and to do such and such things; and others of them to Death, to Wickedness, and the like: but that this was all left to *Adam's* Liberty and Will, and to the State he should be in, whether in a Spiritual or Natural, whether in good or ill; all this, (they that please may look back and see it) I suppose said once for all both as to *Cain* and all Men, and as to all their Posterity, excepting some particular Persons upon their actual Correspondence either in Good or Ill, that may have drawn upon themselves, the one, singular Blessings and Graces of God, and the other, remarkable Punishments, both upon themselves and their Posterity; so that though all had an equal Share and Advantage in *Adam*, yet might it so come to pass that there might be found great inequality among them by means of the different intermediate Stocks interposed between them and *Adam*.

XV. *General Principles by which to judge of the Posterity of Men.*

XV. We must, to see clearly into the different lot of *Adam's* Posterity and of God's providential dealing with them, have before our Eyes the Truths whereof I have proposed the most part in treating of Original Sin, such as these: that Man begets his like in the same State and in the same Degree he himself is in; that God joins the Grace of his Light and of his good Motions to the Soul of every Man all the while this Life and the Time of his Tryal lasts; that if *Adam* received into Favour again, had constantly and absolutely rejected the Grace offered him, so as to have always continued in a State of Damnation, nevertheless the Children which he should have begotten in this State during this Life, would not have been deprived of the inward Offer of this Grace; but that if they had happened to dye before the free use of their divine Faculties, they would by God have been reckoned as Persons that had not received his Grace, seeing in truth they accepted it neither by themselves nor by their Father: whereas had they come to Age and the free Use of their Faculties, it had been their part to have accepted or refused this divine Grace: but that then their

their Soul would have had greater Inclination to have refused than to have admitted this Grace: whereas had Adam embraced the Grace of God, and strengthened and habituated himself in it, his Children as soon as born, though partaking of the corrupt Root of Nature which is the Devil's Element, would not only have been Partakers of the Inspirations of the good Spirit and Blessings of God, but also of the good Inclinations and Habits of their Father: by means of which the good Spirit would have very easily and without much trouble got the Dominion in them when they should come to the age of full Liberty, and would without any difficulty at all have ruled in them had they dyed in their Infancy, since their Origine was in the Grace of God. All this is applicable to *Cain's* Posterity.

XVI. Supposing *Cain* were wicked as indeed he was; God did not less will the Salvation of his Posterity, than of the Children of those who were Holy; but they were not so disposed nor so apt to give way to the Grace of God as the Posterity of the Righteous.

The first Graces of Calling, of Illumination, and of the good Motions which God presented to *Adam* after his Fall, the Offer and the objective Gift of his good Spirit and of his other Blessings were given him for himself and for his Descendants equally and without Distinction: but the Graces of Divine Retribution and Correspondence, were not given, nor will they be given, to his Descendants, but in Proportion to their Correspondence: so that all the Children of *Adam* equally partake of the first Graces on God's part, but not of these latter, which are conditional.

XVII. Nevertheless, it seems that the Children of *Cain* and of the Wicked have not been either so enlightened or so moved by God, as the Children of *Seth* and of other good Men: And does not this seem contrary to that Equality of Communication which we say was made equally to all Men on God's part? I answer, that this is no way contrary, for two Reasons, first, that in these Lights and Motions of good Men, there are not only the Graces of the first sort, the absolute and primitive ones; but likewise those of Retribution and Correspondence, their Parents having

Chap. VI

XVI. God will equally the Salvation of all, but all are not equally disposed. He offers equally the Grace of Calling, but does not equally give the Grace of Correspondence.

XVII. How it comes to pass that the Children of *Cain* and of the Wicked are not so enlightened, nor so moved by God, as those of the

Righteous, notwithstanding the Equality of Providence.

Chap. VI. having corresponded to God, and they have partaken of the Estate of their Parents; whereas in the wicked there being no such Correspondence, it is no wonder if neither they, nor consequently their Children, have any share in these Graces of Correspondence, and Re-tribution: but this hinders not but that they might have been equal Sharers in the Primitive Graces.

The *second* Reason of this Inequality is this, because the Wicked for their part being distracted from the inward Voice of God, from his Light and his good Mo-tions, and hearkening to the Devil and their own Corruption, get an Habit of so doing; and so, the Light of God, his Voice and his Strokes become insen-sible to them; because they are turned away from them, and are habitually and obstinately other ways taken up. And this Disposition of Soul being habitu-al, passes from Fathers to Children (as has been before proved:) so that the Children of the Wicked and Worldly are born with a Disposition not to hearken to God, but to turn away and fly from him, and to fol-low the Devil and their own corrupt Inclinations; and the Children of Good Men in quite contrary Dispositions: Nevertheless, God's Providence treats 'em and divides among them all from the beginning, and on his part equally and impartially. He is a Sun that shines for all and to all equally: but such as from their Race and Birth have Cataracts on their Eyes, or hide themselves in Caves, are not equally sensible of his Light.

God on his part at first speaks to all with an equal Voice and equally lowd, but all, through their own Fault, have not their Ears alike good or equally freed from the Tumult and Noise of their Passions, and of corrupt Objects, which hinder the Soul from hearing the Voice of God.

XVIII. XVIII. Thus, for all the Universality and Imparti-
Disadvan- ality of Divine Providence as to the Interiour, the Po-
tages of the sterity of the Wicked are neither so clear-sighted, nor
Posterity of so moved to Good, nor so much in the Fear of God,
the Wicked nor so removed from the Devil and Vice, as the Good
notwith- are; on the contrary, they are rather full of Darknes
standing and Evil Motions, of contempt of God, and of Hatred of
the Equa- Verue and Love of Vice, whatever Attempts God
lity of Pro- may make upon them in this Life to inspire the contra-
vidence. ry.

ry. I will by and by descend to other special Advantages or Disadvantages of each of them, as outward Revelations, and the Privation of them and the like: but this Difference belongs rather to *Seth's* Posterity by *Noah*, than to *Cain's*. I come now to speak something of *Abel*, and of God's Providence over the Righteous.

C H A P. VII.

Of the particular Providence of God in relation to the Good, as well with regard to the Evils that may befall them from the Creatures, from wicked Men and Devils, as to those they may commit themselves.

I.  HAT which made the difference between *Abel* and *Cain* was not this pretended Decree of Predestination and Election made before any regard was had to Man's Correspondence. The Words of Scripture are expressly contrary to this, when God says to *Cain* (a), *If thou doest well, shall not (thy Sacrifice or Person) be accepted?* and *St. Paul* likewise, when he speaks of *Abel* (b), that it was *by Faith* that his Sacrifice was more excellent than *Cain's*: and that he and all the Patriarchs *pleas'd* (b) *God through Faith*. But I will lay down some Grounds of this Difference between them.

I. *Grounds and Reasons of the difference put between Cain and Abel.*

(a) Gen. 4. 7.

(b) Heb. 11. 4, &c.

'Tis probable *Abel* was begotten when *Adam* and *Eve* were in a more exalted degree of Perfection and Divine Love than when they begot *Cain*; and it may be educated him better, or spoil'd him less than they did *Cain*: it may be too, that when he was born the Conjunction of the Heavenly, Elementary, and Earthly Bodies, which influence Man's Body, was more Favourable than at *Cain's* Nativity. Though Vice and Vertue depend not upon Matter, yet 'tis certain that a good Temperament is as assisting to Wisdom and Vertue, as an ill

Chap. VII ill one is to Folly and Vice. When I speak of Influences, I don't pretend to vouch for all the Fooleries of Judiciary Astrologers; so neither do I take Judiciary Astrology in it self to be an ill grounded or despicable Science: It is by no means so, could we but tell how to find it out, and distinguish the true one and its true Principles from the false. I have sufficiently given my Opinion upon this Point elsewhere (a), for any that have a mind to know more of it. But what chiefly made the difference betwixt *Cain* and *Abel* was this (understand me in quality of an admittive and occasional, not of an efficient and real Cause of God's Gifts :) *Abel* had corresponded to all the Invitations, Calls and Motions of God; and as God augmented his Graces of Divine Correspondence and Recompence, he surrender'd himself up to them, and faithfully comply'd with them, in the manner as has been shewn at large in that Treatise that speaks of the Operation of God and the Co-operation of Man. So that *Abel* grew daily more and more the Object of the special Providence and singular Care of *Jesus Christ*, the more faithfully he adher'd to his Inspiration and Illumination.

(a) Cog.
Rat. Lib.
3. Cap. 9.
in Notis.

II. The Impartiality of Providence in this Diversity.

II. Now this is no Partiality in Providence, that things so standing, *Abel* was more favoured than *Cain*. This Preference was an Effect of the Justice, Truth, and Goodness of God, and not of a partial, unreasonable, capricious mere Good Pleasure, as some Men phancy, whatever specious Names they give it. It was *Just* that God should in a more special manner turn towards him who turned away from every thing on purpose to be wholly his. God having made known to Man this Truth, that he would take into his special Grace and Protection all that resigned themselves to him, his Truth was concerned to see this ratified by a more singular Providence and a larger Effusion of Graces upon such, than upon either the rebellious or careless Sinners. Lastly, the Goodness of God cannot but communicate it self in the largest measure, and indeed boundlessly to all that are disposed to receive it. Nor does this at all hinder but Providence was as watchful over *Cain's* Salvation and altogether as impartial, with regard to *Cain's* State and Correspondence,

spondence, as it was over *Abel's*, dealing with him but answerably to the State he was in. Chap. VII

III. When *Abel* had attained (by ways I have elsewhere observed) to the State of perfect Resignation to God, of solid Righteousness and Regeneration, God was then no longer upon the reserve with him: *Abel's* and God's Interests were the same thing; for he was one with God. The Thoughts, Passions, Desires, the Motions, Words, the Walking and Resting, the Eating and Drinking, the whole of *Abel*, was God's as much as if it had concerned him immediately. Therefore did God also dispose, direct and govern all that belonged to him by a most special Providence and Wisdom, by most particular Inspirations and Motions of the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*; all whose Treasures were *Abel's*, nay the whole World and all God's Works, according to *St. Paul's* Words to the Saints (a): *All is yours, you are Christ's, and Christ is God's*. Nevertheless, as in this World a weak and innocent Child, though all his Father's Goods be his, yet is bound, even under pain of Theft, not to use them against his Father's Will, but to leave them to be managed and used even by Slaves, and to receive no more than his Father pleases, and just as he pleases, till he be of Age: so *Abel* and other Holy Men are obliged by God till the Resurrection of the Just to wait for the Enjoyment of God's Works and the Fulness of his Favours; and this the rather, because the Works of God, the World and the Creatures are at present covered over and quite filled with the Curse, and are in a great measure therefore under the Devil's Power; because the Righteous are as yet among the Wicked, with whom there are certain measures to be observed, and are themselves as yet full of Bodily Infirmities, as well as Spiritual ones, as to the things of the World, not knowing of themselves what is better or worse for them, and indeed it being their Duty not to look after such things out of Curiosity and beyond Necessity, as well to avoid all hurtful Distraction, as not to expose themselves to Vanity, Pride and the Cheats of the Devil.

But *Jesus Christ*, whose they are, knows and can do all things for them: he therefore, from the first entire Resignation of all that concerns them into his Hands,

III. *All is the good Man's: tho' he must not meddle with any thing himself, but remit all to the disposal of Jesus Christ. God's most singular Providence over his Servants in all things.*

(a) 1 Cor. 3. 22.

Chap. VII judges and chuses for them, and by an especial Care, and in a most wise and suitable Manner, guides all their Affairs and Occurrences which they could neither have discovered nor ordered. He prepares their Way before them, and guides their Steps in it; he chuses their State for them, their Labour and Rest, Coming in and Going out, their Speech and Silence, Health and Sicknes, Life and Death, the Time, Manner, and Circumstances of every thing; so that *not so much as a single hair*, to speak in Scripture-Language, *falls from their head*, but by the Direction of their Heavenly Father, *being all numbred*, and observed by him; and if God by his general Providence takes care of the Lillies of the Field, and provides Meat for the Birds, and if *a Sparrow falls not to the ground but by the Laws and Will of his universal Providence*, how shall not his most special Providence, his particular Providence of Correspondence to his Friends and Dear Children entirely abandoning themselves to him, not provide them with Food and Raiment, and not after a most singular manner dispose of their Life and Death? *Jesus Christ* puts such Questions as these, to shew that these are such indisputable Truths, that one cannot think of denying them without manifest Absurdity and Impiety both. And so I won't stay to quote a hundred and a hundred Passages there are in the Scriptures to this purpose.

IV. Such holy Souls, regenerate and resigned to God, are no longer under any Fatality, nor under the fortuitous Hazard of Events and of the Course of Nature, but under God's Hand and the Wings of the Most High. Not that the things of the Elementary World and natural Accidents do no longer affect them, or that they were not at all now subject to them. We see the contrary, that they are laden with them, and even persecuted, and often groan under these Burdens and rigorous Usage. But what is peculiarly their Comfort is, that they are not subjected to them by the mere natural and fortuitous Course of Thing, but by the special Will and Providence of God, who interests himself in all these outward Occurrences so far as his Friends are concerned in them, and in divers ways brings them upon them, sometimes according to their natural course, at other times by changing, encreasing, lessening, continuing,

IV. The
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tinuing, lengthening or shortening them, as their occasions require, as his most singular Providence and particular Good-will to his Friends sees most proper for promoting their Salvation and his own Glory. So that the true Children of God are guided and provided for in a special manner by him in the very midst of all the Inconstancy of Nature, in the midst of the Wicked, and even of Devils themselves which surround them, but as to them are under Chains: in a word, all the Creatures of Heaven, Earth and Hell are under God's restraining Hand as to, I do not say, the Wicked and Ungodly who are not to flatter themselves with this paternal Providence, but as to such Souls as are truly resigned to God and filled with his Love. The Devils cannot come near them without God's special Leave, as may be seen in the Book of *Job* (a), and in *Christ's* Words to *St. Peter* (b), *Satan has desired to sift you as Wheat*. Wicked Men can neither hurt or afflict them or put them to Death, but just as God by his Hand and Counsel determines the Course and Ways their Malice shall take, by putting a stop to it, more or less on the side he thinks fit; as the holy Assembly of the Apostles acknowledges in saying thus to him (c); *Against thy holy Son Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel are gathered together, to do all that thy Hand and thy Counsel had before determined to be done* (d): Not that God had before, by a preventing and antecedent Decree will'd or consented, that these People should be of so monstrous a Wickedness as to sin thus against God; but that God foresaw; 1. That after he had done all that was possible to root their Wickedness out of their Hearts, yet would they as to the generality voluntarily continue in it; 2. That the Torrent of their Malice would have violently carried away *Jesus Christ* and all the Saints a thousand times and a thousand ways, had they but had an Opportunity, and had this Malice been left to it self: 3. That God would not for the Wickedness of the Ungodly, forbear to send his Son for the good of others, and even of all, letting him converse, live, and die among Men, both himself and his Disciples after such a manner as tended to the saving

Chap. VII


(a) *Job*
Chap. 1,
and 2.(b) *Luke*
22. 31.(c) *Acts*
4. 27, 28.(d) This
Text is
by some
render'd
thus, *Herod and P. Pilate with the Gentiles and the People of Israel are gather'd together, against thy holy Son Jesus, whom thou hast the ordain'd to*

I 4.

do all that thy Hand and thy Counsel had before determin'd to be done.

Chap. VII the World: 4. And after all this, that the Wicked might not by their Malice cut off either *Jesus Christ* or his Followers unseasonably, God cast up Banks against the naturally indeterminate Deluge of their Wickedness; his *Hand* and his *Counsel* were pleased to bridle it outwardly on most sides, and leave it open only at such a time, in such a way, and only to such a Degree of Violence, marking it out a way with his Finger, as he sets to the Sea its Bounds, saying to it (d), *Here shall thy proud Waves be staid and broken, and shall go no further.*

(d) Job
38. 11.

V. God determines none to Evil. How he determines the Behaviour of the Wicked.

V. I must say it again; this Place in the *ABs*, and others such like, do not mean that God determines Men to Evil either by Decree or Impression. That is not strictly the matter here treated of. The Question is not to know, whether God had determined the Hearts of *Pilate* and *Herod*, and of the Jews and Gentiles to take pleasure in Sin, to continue obstinately in it, and not to hearken to the Voice of God, but to follow the Suggestions of the Devil and their own corrupt Nature. God forbid we should think God had determined them to chuse Sin and Death, and to forsake the Grace and Love of God: for the contrary is true, that God had done and would still have done all that possibly he could to determine them to Good. But it being impossible he should will the forcing their Liberty, and foreseeing the generality of the Men of those times (without fixing upon any Single Person) high and low, Jews and Gentiles, would obstinately adhere to the Party of the Devil and Sin, and then would give themselves up to all manner of Mischief, and bear down all that was Good before them, and consequently *Jesus Christ* among the rest; upon this it was that his *Hand* and his *Counsel* interposed, to determine it, or if you will to determine them; not to determine a Will that was balancing between Good and Ill, to chuse the Ill rather than the Good; but to regulate and determine, to limit and bound the Violence and outward overflowings of a Will, that was already antecedently and obstinately determined against the Will of God, towards the Side of Evil, of Iniquity and Mischief, which it was generally and indeterminately ready to commit in all Kinds and all Ways. 'Tis here

the Hand and Counsel of God intervene, and do indeed determine the Breach and outward Course of this Malice of theirs; that instead of breaking out on all sides, and making a thousand direful and diabolical Ravages, as it would have done had not God's mighty Hand restrained it, it should be let out only on such a side, and on that no farther than the Bounds set it by the Hand of God, straighter or wider as he saw most convenient for his own Glory and the Salvation of his Children.

VI. But good Men must not be negligent, upon pretence of this so special Providence of God, nor be less upon their Guard, idly waiting for, and foolishly expecting God's particular and extraordinary Help. It is God's Will they should (as much as in them lies) in his Fear, make use of the natural Means he affords them, seeing his End in creating Nature was to manifest himself and to operate by it: he therefore that rejects Nature without Reason, rejects the Work of God and the Manifestation of himself which he designed by it; and besides, God will not have us despise the Gifts of Prudence and Wisdom, of Circumspection, of Moderation and Counsel, which are all Gifts of his Good Spirit, which those that love him certainly will not despise. So that such giddy and presumptuous People who on pretence of resigning themselves to God's special Providence, without any Necessity rashly expose themselves to Hazards and Dangers, are rather Contemners of God the Creator, and indeed of the Holy Spirit too and his greatly valuable Gifts of Prudence, Order, and Wisdom, than Persons truly resigned to God, who is a God of Order, Measure and Regularity in all things, an Enemy to Precipitation and Confusion; which is the Devils Element, not God's.

VII. God makes use always, as far as may be, of the most natural and shortest Ways, and will not constantly be a doing visible or invisible Miracles; and this chiefly for two Reasons; the one, because this kind of Operations of God are not absolutely preventing and antecedent, such as he does for Man as out of his meer good Pleasure only; but these are Operations that are done in correspondence to some former Carriage

Chap. VII

VI. Under
Pretence of
the Divine
Providence
Men must
neither
neglect
themselves
nor natu-
ral Means.

VII. Why
God is spa-
ring in his
miraculous
Works.

Chap. VII age of Man's, which God intends then as it were to recompence. Now an imprudent or careless Conduct of ones self is no proper Means to engage God to make such mighty and glorious returns; there being no Grounds for any return at all. Therefore this is no proper Way to move God to work Miracles in favour of us. The *other* Reason is this, that God does not correspond by the extraordinary Effects of a special Providence but only to supply the Defects of natural Causes, or to carry things higher than by natural Causes alone they would have gone; which supposes they have been made use of already as far as possible, and that it was God's Providence that employed them, and then added to them what they wanted to the attaining the End aimed at. And this Assistance which God thus gives by his Providence, must be understood of *Jesus Christ's* acting thus either himself immediately or by the Mediation and Ministry of his Angels.

*VIII. When
other God's
Providence
be wanting
to good Men
when it
suffers
them to
fall.*

VIII. It is somewhat harder to comprehend the Manner of God's dealing with good Men with reference to their Sins, which it should seem God permits when it was in his Power to hinder them: how must we understand this? Why does he not give them his Grace, his Light, and his Strength. in such Proportions as they desire and beg of him? This seems to give some Grounds of Complaint against the Divine Providence, which good Men are tempted to believe often fails them upon these Occasions. To this it is commonly answered, and very well to stop the Mouth of all Murmurers, that seeing Man since his Fall deserves nothing but Hell; and seeing there is still within him an infinite number of secret Evils which he sees not, and which indispose him for the receiving of God's Grace, seeing heretofore when God offered his Grace he rejected it; and seeing it is but fit the Providence of God should manifest his Justice in his Dealings with Men; that from all this it follows, that no Man has Reason to complain of God, not only when he does not send such Measures of his Grace as we beg he would, but should he give us none at all. And this should stop all Murmuring.

But

But upon my Supposition, that notwithstanding Chap. VII
 Man's Unworthiness, God still continues after his Fall
 to offer even to the Wicked themselves all his prevent-
 ing Graces, to draw them out of Sin and to hinder
 them from committing it, how is this consistent with
 the actual Failings of good Men, when they are done
 against their Wills? That wicked Men fall for all the
 Tender of God's Graces is no wonder, since they free-
 ly turn away from them. So likewise neither is it
 strange that good Men should fall when they are
 wilfully careless. But when their Will continues sted-
 fast and grows too, in Goodness, that for all that they
 should commit such Faults as they would not, and do
 beg the Grace not to commit, yet do not obtain
 it; this is what is hard to reconcile with the liberal
 Providence of God, which must be so particularly con-
 cerned for them, unless we say it fails them in their
 need.

IX. Much may be said upon this and other Cases of IX. *An-*
 the like nature: but without engaging my self so far, I *swe- to*
 shall content my self to say a Word or two upon the *this Diffi-*
 principal of them, and the rather because you may *culty.*
 find elsewhere (a) Matters and Reasons of the like (a) *Occ.*
 Nature with these here, upon which I shall not now *of Co-op.*
 enlarge. Chap. 9.

First then, God never fails, nor ever will, to supply § 20,
 good Men with all possible Graces that are necessary to
 make them avoid all mortal Sin, or such as extinguish-
 es and is inconsistent with the Love of God. Good
 Men never sin so, but inexcusably and by rejecting the
 Grace that God offered them to preserve them from
 such Falls. But God having done all that could be
 done for them, without offering Violence to their Li-
 berty; if they will Sin, all that God's Providence then
 does, is so to dispose of the Eruption, the outward
 Tendency, Ways and Circumstances of their Fall,
 that in case they be willing to rise again afterward
 when God calls them, this their Fall may be an Occa-
 sion to them to humble themselves, and to be more
 faithful and firm in their Resolutions of Obedience for
 the future.

Secondly,

Chap. VII

(b) Oec.

of Co-op.

Chap. 9.

§ 33, &c.

Secondly, As to Sins of Infirmity, of which I have spoken in another place (b), I say, God likewise always presents his Grace to enable us to avoid them; and that this Grace is sufficient for that purpose without any other degree of new Grace. But I say too, that this Grace does not always give a sensible Manifestation of its Operations; yet is not the denying this Manifestation a denying of Grace; on the contrary, this hiding of the Manifestation of God's Grace, is it self a Grace; and the presence of this Manifestation is oftentimes such as could not subsist without great Damage to the Soul, which God is pleased to preserve it from, by not manifesting himself to it thus openly, though both Himself and his Grace are so mightily and powerfully present as to be able in a Moment to make Man perfectly like an Angel, if his Disposition, or rather his Indisposition, could bear it.

X. The

wonderful

Conduct

and Good-

ness of God's

Providence

when he

permits the

Fauls of

good Men.

X. For the better understanding of this Truth, we must consider, that God's Providence is chiefly concerned to keep his Children from the Fall of the Devils, from Pride, Self-acquiescence and Satisfaction, and from Spiritual Self-love: from all which nothing but Humility can secure them. But an actual or weak Humility could not stand out against the World, the Devil and our own Corruption, unless it grow into an habitual one. Nor can an habitual Humility be acquired but by repeated Convictions and a continual View of our Imperfections and Weakness, and of such Failings and Faults as we commit, even against our Wills. For this reason it is that God, to make so great and cardinal a Vertue, as habitual Humility to spring up in the Hearts of good Men; does not suffer his Grace in them always to manifest it self. Whence it comes to pass that the not seeing the Rays thereof, or not feeling the actual Heat of it, at some certain Junctures, they sail and fall: but the Lord holds them by the Hand, and they rising quickly again through the Divine Assistance, profoundly humble themselves before his Divine Majesty, who by this Means produces in them this wonderful Gift of habitual Humility, by which alone they can be preserved from the Fall of the Devils.

And

And is not this Providence of God altogether wonderful? And is it not much more for their Advantage than if God had then manifested in them the Presence of his Grace, and had thereby prevented such an Act of Failure and Infirmary, which good Men with they might have been able to have avoided?

XI. No, the Adorable Providence of our God never is wanting to the Prayers and good Desires of his Children, but grants them more fully and perfectly than they themselves could wish. Suppose one should wish and beg of God, the Grace, not to fail in such and such things. What does God here? He grants such a one his Grace in Substance, or rather it already dwells habitually in him. Suppose God make the Manifestation and Activity of it appear in him; then indeed it will so come to pass that such a Person shall not fail in such and such things; but likewise, so far will our Human Weakness be from finding therein any certain Occasion of growing in Humility, that it will rather take Occasion thence to be tempted to Self-complacency, Vain-glory, Self-adherence and Self-love, which is doubtless a much greater Danger and less Advantage to such a Soul, than if it had failed, and from this Defect had taken occasion of advancing in sound Humility. Whence we see that God hears and fulfils in substance the Desires and Prayers of the Soul, much more solidly and fully than she thinks and wishes for, even by not formally hearing her in that particular Manner that she prescribed him, as I may say, or as she required and begg'd of him by her Prayers. that were determined and confined to certain particular things.

Chap. VII

O III

XI. God

does in Sub-

stance and

more fully

hear the

Soul which

he lets thus

fail, than if

he heard

her in the

very way

she desires.

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and

XII. He

hears the

Soul even

with re-

gard to

what she

wishes.

by

XII. And there is somewhat more yet in this; for the Desire and Prayer which the Soul made for Grace not to fail in this or that Instance, is particularly heard, though indeed she actually fail; because this Fall of hers being thus involuntary, and the Soul having ardently desired the contrary, God accounts this her Desire for the Deed, and does not impute her Failure to her as Sin and Evil, in Consideration of her Good-will not to fail. And as this Good-will takes away and annihilates, as I may say, the Malignity which otherwise would have been in such Failing, so

Chap. VII by the same Reason and through the Grace of God, such a Fault cannot hurt her.

XIII. O-
ther Cases
where there
is not so
much
ground for
the afore-
said Diffi-
culty.

† Vol. 5.
Chap. 5.

XIII. I shall not mention other Reasons for which these sorts of Faults and Falls may happen; because in many Cases, such Events are easily reconcilable with the Plenitude of God's Providence, as it would in this Case for Example, should the Soul take Pleasure in such sort of Falls: for then there would be no Reason to wonder if she fell, and that God suffer'd her so to do, without any Diminution to the Greatness of his good Providence. *Secondly*, When a Man voluntarily and without necessity lets his Mind be distracted from the Sense of God's Presence, there is no wonder if he neither see nor feel the Manifestation of the Divine Grace, and consequently if he then come to fail, notwithstanding all his former good Purposes. *Thirdly*, When his Good-will was but a *Velleity*, but an imperfect and half Desire, 'tis then no marvel if he do not find himself in full Possession of the Grace of God. *Lastly*, When Souls have yet left in their Ground many habitual Impurities that must be driven thence and made to break out, the Justice of God, and indeed the very Light of his Grace must needs discover them and make them appear, as has been seen when I treated of *the Purification of the Soul*†; These four Cases, and it may be several more, are not so hard to resolve, as is that wherein we suppose the Soul pure and of a perfectly good Will, and greatly troubled at such Failings. and heartily desiring to be freed from the commission of 'em, and that never takes off her Thoughts from God, but by the indispensable Necessities wherein the Weaknesses of our Nature engage us, and yet comes to fall; but withall, after such a manner as shews the adorable Benignity of God's gracious Providence.

C H A P. VIII.

The impartial Conduct of Universal Providence towards the Posterity of Seth and Noah, Good and Bad, Heathen and not Heathen, Ordinary and Extraordinary Persons.

I.



IT remains that we make some Reflections on the Posterity of *Seth*, which was the only one that peopled the World by *Noah* a Branch of it, the rest having been all cut off by the Flood; and we must see how the Divine Providence has universally and impartially taken care of the Salvation of this Posterity, notwithstanding the fearful Inequality there has been, and still is and will be hereafter (but for a short time only) between all that have or shall descend from it.

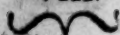
II. All that has been said of *Adam*, of *Cain*, and of *Abel*, viz. That God did not antecedently destine nor determine absolutely their Liberty, their Acts, Salvation or Damnation, no more than he did the Number, Acts and State of their Posterity; all this must here be supposed.

III. Were all Men in a State of Equality, at least as to things Spiritual, there would be no Difficulty to reconcile this with the Universality and Impartiality of the Divine Providence; and there would be but very little to shew how the outward Estate of Men may be unequal, though the Divine Providence be impartial. But it is well known, there are Men more and less enlighten'd, more and less mov'd; some in a State of meer Beasts, others in that of Damnation and of Devils, and others again in a State of Salvation; that some have the Advantages of Revelation, of Graces and Blessings which others have not; not to mention the Changes and Inequalities that happen upon the Revolutions of Kingdoms and Monarchies, the State and Alteration whereof draw after them a Train of Consequences

I. *The Design of what follows.*

II. *The Supposal and Application of the preceding Discourse.*

III. *The Difficulties in question: How the Inequality of the State of Men agrees with the Universality and Impartiality of Providence*

Chap.
VIII.

IV. *The
Solution.
Prevent-
ing Graces
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pondence
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the Impar-
tiality of
Providence*

quences that reach and affect the Spiritual Condition of Mens Souls, and by that means their Eternal Salvation too. And here lies some Difficulty in conceiving how so prodigious a Disparity can consist with Divine Providence, upon supposition that it is universal and impartial in its Care to procure the Salvation of all Men.

IV. See here some Truths and Principles, which in my Opinion, ought to satisfy us, and let us understand how all sorts of Events, though never so different and unequal, are very consistent with the Universality and Impartiality of this Divine Providence. The principal of these Truths depends on the Distinction that has often been made between such Graces of God as are Preventing, and such as are of Correspondence. We have seen that God not only prevented Man before the Fall; but likewise that after his Sin he has restored him by the preventing Gifts of his Light, of his good Motions, of the Care of his Angels, and of the Blessings of Nature. These Offers and Graces continue during this Life. But there are besides these, other Graces, which consist, either in the inward Insinuation and Fructification of these first Graces, or in their Augmentation, or in the Gift of new ones. These are such as God will not give but by way of Correspondence and Reward, and this more or less as Men do more or less correspond to him. Now we know Men are free to correspond or not. Therefore upon this account we are not to wonder there should be an Inequality among Men, notwithstanding the Universality and Impartiality of the Divine Providence. It is because some correspond to God, and others will not. The Impartiality and Equality of God's Justice, requires that upon their correspondence he should deal differently with them; and as 'tis fit it should happen to every one according to their Choice, that unequal Things should be given to those that have made unequal Choices. We must not judge of the Equality and Impartiality of God by comparing one Act of his Providence with another Act of the same Providence, but by comparing one Act of this Divine Providence with the Disposition, Correspondence and Choice of one Subject, and by comparing another Act of the same Providence

vidence with the Disposition of another Subject. And here we shall find a most perfect and just Equality and Proportion. We know that in a well ordered Government true Justice is equally dispensed to all, that she has but one Balance and one Weight, and yet that she treats very differently those whose Cases are unlike, without any Prejudice to her Impartiality and her Equality.

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VIII.

V. Thus therefore must we not wonder if among the Children of *Seth* some were wicked, worldly, and lost, and at length destroyed by God's Judgments in the Deluge, and if there was among them too a most righteous *Enoch*, with whom God was so peculiarly familiar as to take him out of the World miraculously without his ever dying. That he should in the same, or much after the same Manner, so familiarly communicate himself to just *Noah*, as not to suffer him, by a singular Effect of his Divine Providence, to taste Death with the first World. Nor did this proceed from any Partiality or Decree more in favour of some than others before any regard to their corresponding with God's Preventing Graces. St. Paul observes in his Epistle to the *Hebrews* (a) that they pleased God by their corresponding to him *through Faith*. Had others, who would be and would continue wicked, been willing to comply and to co-operate with God's Preventing Graces, as *Enoch*, *Noah*, and other Holy Persons did, God would have done them the same Favours in Substance though some other way, than by translating them into Heaven as he did *Enoch*: for God has infinite Ways of doing accessory and outward Kindnesses, that shall be the same in Substance with regard to Mens real Happiness and Perfection.

V. The Application of these Truths to the Posterity of *Seth*.

(a) Heb. Chap. 11.

VI. This Truth would sufficiently make us comprehend the substantial Equality there is in all the apparent Inequality in the Conduct of a God, that is universal and impartial towards all his Creatures, were it not that the Darkness we are in raises some Clouds of Difficulties that seem to obscure it. There are three or four Instances which I shall here set down.

VI. Four Difficulties about the difference of God's dealing with Men.

1. 'Tis said, *first*, That, my Answer reaching only the Graces of Correspondence, the preventing Graces therefore, especially the inward Lights and Touches

The First.

Chap. of God ought to be equal; and that yet they are not
VIII. so in all, as is beyond all doubt known by Experience.

The Second. 2. 'Tis said, That many before having at all corresponded, have many Graces that are saving and of correspondence, as we see in the Posterity of the Israelites and of Christians; and that others are deprived or them without having rejected them, as the Children of the Heathen,

The Third. 3. 'Tis objected, That those who refuse to correspond have for all that, Advantages which others cannot have, would they correspond never so willingly: for Example, Christians, though wicked and rebellious, have yet the advantage of Revelation, with many more, which Pagans though never so honestly inclined cannot have as they have.

The Fourth. 4. Lastly, they say, That among the generality of those that do correspond on one hand, and of those that do not correspond on the other, there are still on God's part personal and particular Choices, Preferences and Exceptions, both among Infidels and among Believers; that there are Vessels of Election and of Wrath among the one, as St. Paul and Judas; and that among the other there are Persons more or less favoured of God, as a Socrates and a Nero among the Heathen.

VII. *The Solution of these Difficulties.* VII. It is not necessary for all sorts of Readers that I answer these Objections. Those of any Penetration have no doubt observed that I have already upon divers Occasions laid down those Principles, that will give a satisfactory Account of all that is here urged. But for the sake of the weakest Capacities I shall more particularly set down a Truth or two that will easily clear this Point, and will my self make the Application of them.

The Answer to the first. The Solution of the two first of these Difficulties depends on this Truth, That God has immutably so appointed that such things as are productive should produce things like themselves, and in the State the things producing were then in. Therefore, if one, whose Faculties are turned away from Evil and Darkness, and are turned towards Light and Good, and by consequence are very sensible and fit to receive the Impressions of the Light and Motions of God, beget another

another in this State, the Person so begotten will from his very Birth have a Soul very tender and susceptible of the Divine Light and Motions; and will need only barely to consent, to come to a very lively Enjoyment and Actuation of them. By the same Reason a Soul turned towards Darknes, towards the Earth, and Evil, will beget one in the same State. But the turning away of a Soul towards Darknes and towards Evil is an Hindrance to the Light and Good Motions of preventing Grace; and the Sensibility of such a Soul being taken up with Low and Earthly things, is thereby far removed from having any lively Sentiments of Spiritual Things. Therefore this Inequality of the Delicate Sense that some have of his Divine Light and Motions, and of the Insensibleness of others in this Point, doth not proceed from God. He strikes, shines, and presses equally on his part, and, may be, much more upon Account of such as are insensible than for others: but they are hardened. A Voice, though loud, is less heard by one at a distance than a lower is by one near. And can we say it is so, because he that is a far off is not called upon so much nor so loudly out of meer partiality, as he that is near is?

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VIII. And I dare assert it as a Truth, that would the wickedest Men in the World but forbear to hearken to the Devil, their own Malice, and the Motions of corrupt Nature, the Light of God and his Divine Strokes would prove more sensible to them than to many others, that had not been quite so bad, and even than to many good Men: and this is what has been verified in many, who of great Sinners have on a sudden become great Converts and great Saints. The Reason of this extraordinary Sensibility, is because two Contraries are more easily perceived near each other than otherwise, according to the true Rule, *Contraria juxta se posita magis elucescunt*. So that a Sinner that has never felt any but Motions of Darknes, coming by his turning away from them to feel those of God, which are infinitely contrary to them, may be so livelily stricken with them, as to feel himself transported by them as it were from Hell to Heaven, if his turning away from his Sins be sincere and generous, and he at the same time willingly throw him-

VIII. *Wicked Men may become more sensible of God's Grace than good Men.*

Chap. self into this Ocean of infinite Charity, which cries in
 VIII. the Hearts of all Men more loudly than in the Streets
 of *Jerusalem* (a), *come unto me all ye that labour and are*
 (a) *Matt. heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

IX. To this Reason (of the actual State of the Per-
 son begetting and of the Posterity begotten) we must
 add another taken from Habits that pass from one to
 another, and get Strength both in the one and the
 other. For this Reason, one that actually turns away
 his Understanding from a Light, and from a good In-
 spiration presented to his Heart by God, to consider
 and to be moved by one from the Devil or corrupt
 Nature, such a one I say, that thus renders himself
 insensible to God in such and such an Act, and then in
 another, and so on, such an one becomes habitually
 and in all things insensible of the Divine Strokes, tho'
 God on his part be always knocking and speaking to
 his Heart, which is often so blinded as to take the
 Motions and Light of God for the Temptations and
 Falsities of the Devil, from which yet God preserves
 as much as is necessary Sinners that are otherwise of
 sincere Hearts.

X. We see hence, that the second Instance has no
 Difficulty in it, especially when supported with these
 two Considerations: the *first*, That when the Friends
 of God pray for certain Persons, or for certain Sinners,
 God looks upon these Prayers as coming from these
 Sinners themselves, and upon this ground deals with
 them by the Correspondence of his Graces: the *second*,
 That the Graces, even those of Correspondence which
 God gives any one are for that Person himself, and for
 all those that shall come from him by Generation. We
 shall easily comprehend the first of these Truths and its
 Consequence, by supposing, what is but true, that
 God does not bestow certain Graces but upon the
 score of some precedent Acts of his Creature; and
 that of all the Acts of a Creature there are none more
 pleasing to him than Love or Charity, but above all,
 the Charity that is most pure and free from Self-inter-
 est, as is the Charity of those Prayers we make in
 the behalf of others. Now as on God's part there are
 special Divine Graces, Gifts and Motions for his spe-
 cial Friends, and for their peculiar Acts of Love and
 Virtue,

X. The an-
 swer to the
 second Dif-
 ficulty
 Some before
 any Corre-
 spondence
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 own have
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 of others)
 some speci-
 al Graces
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 spondence.
 The Ad-
 vantages
 of Abra-
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 sterity.

Virtue, hence it follows, that when these Friends of God pray even for Sinners themselves, it being impossible for God not to correspond with their Love and Charitable Desires, he hears their Prayers, and so deals out to these Sinners such special Motions and Graces as are designed for his Friends and their Acts. And all this is very just. God therefore enlightens, strikes, and moves extraordinarily certain Sinners and certain Persons that are prayed for. (as St. *Augustin* was by means of his holy Mother's Prayers) nay, he changes, shortens or lessens their Troubles upon the Mediation of his Friends, and all this, as is evident, following the Rules of his Justice, and without the least Partiality. If he does not do so for other Sinners, 'tis because the Justice of his Correspondence will not suffer him to do any thing extraordinary for them. Let us observe by the way the Good of our Prayers for one another.

The other Consideration relating to God's continuing his Graces to Posterity is no less evident: for God never withdraws his Graces when he has once presented and given them. *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance* (a), says the Apostle in just the like (a) Rom. 11. 29. case. *Abraham*, for Example, had corresponded to God after a special manner, upon which God plentifully bestowed his Favours on him, viz. first, the Discovery of his Secrets to him (b): *Shall I hide from Abraham what I am going to do?* Secondly, A numerous Posterity: Thirdly, Such a Posterity as should in God's Hand be an Instrument of Blessing to all Nations: Lastly, A Posterity of which he would take particular Care. God might without Partiality give *Abraham* these Advantages rather than to others, because he had corresponded to him in such a manner, that God had not yet met with any that had so nobly and so generously resigned themselves to him. Now because God is true and no Retracter of his Gifts, and since he has made it a Law, that every thing should be like its producing Cause, why should *Abraham's* Children from their Birth be deprived of these Privileges? I grant they do not partake of them by a purely carnal Birth from him, that being a thing common to the Heathen, and to the very Beasts: but they do it in Virtue of the Grace of a true, immutable and constant God, which

Chap. was pleased to unite himself to their Origine and Root.
 VIII. So that if on one hand they partake of the natural In-
 firmity and Corruption that was in their Stock during
 this Life, which Corruption is the Element of the
 Enemy of our Souls; they do also from their Stock
 partake of the Grace and good Spirit of God joined to
 this Corruption, bridling, captivating, and even mor-
 tifying it; were it not, that afterwards they being of
 Age come to resist the Spirit of God, and hearken to
 the Devil; as indeed it came to pass. And yet in this
 case the Promise of God concerning the Blessings he
 would bestow upon *Abraham's* Posterity shall be made
 good at a proper time and upon fit Persons, as *St. Paul*
 and the whole Scripture declares, that for the sake of
Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and of the Oath made
 to the Patriachs, God has done and will yet do great
 Wonders, especially towards the End of the World,
 of which I have spoken in another Place.

XI. *It
 are not the
 Heathen
 excluded
 from the
 substantial
 Care of Di-
 vine Pro-
 vidence.*

XI. God does the Heathen no Wrong though he
 give them not these Graces of Correspondence. He
 does not for this, cry less to their Hearts, nor does he
 take the less care of them by the Blessings of Nature,
 nor even by the Ministry of his Angels. 'Tis true he
 does not do it in so special a manner. But there is a gene-
 ral Protection of Angels and Administration of Divine
 Blessings that do always attend upon Nature and Men,
 which would too become special would Men but cor-
 respond to them, whereas they not corresponding,
 these sorts of Graces do not only not encrease, but the
 Obstacles which hinder their Communication to Men,
 daily growing greater, there will at last be no Hopes
 of bringing over the Wicked, but the time of their
 Condemnation will be come.

XII. *The
 Answer to
 the third
 Difficulty.
 Why some
 without
 correspond-
 ing have
 greater
 Advan-*

XII. To the *third* Difficulty I say, 'Tis true, the
 Children of good Men still have many Graces of Cor-
 respondence very advantageous to their Salvation con-
 tinued to them, though themselves do not correspond
 with them: for it is not only true that their Heart is
 more easily susceptible of the Light and Grace of God
 than other Mens is; but they have this Advantage be-
 sides, to know the Will of God by the Revelation of
 his
*ages than others, and that for a long time too. They shall therefore be punished
 more than others.*

his Oracles: which is an *Advantage*, says St. Paul, *great every way* (a), which their Unbelief cannot make void: because God had promised and given it to their Origin for it self and for its Posterity; and because it is indeed an inestimable Advantage to be born of Persons that are the Friends of God. Chap. VIII. (a) Rom. 3. 2.

But likewise when Men stubbornly refuse to correspond to God, his Divine Providence is so just and so impartial, (so far is it from rewarding these rebellious Creatures by new Graces of Correspondence, so far is it from making those they have by Birth saving to them) that it suffers such Chastisements to fall upon them as are much heavier than those that fall upon the rest of the World that have not the Advantages they had. Their Graces then turn to their greater Condemnation; and those that have more particularly known the Will of their Father shall be beaten with more Stripes. We need but look into the History of the Rebellious Jews, and but observe what God already has begun and will continue to do with Christians, to be convinced of the Justice and Impartiality of his Providence.

XIII. As to the Heathen, should any of them live according to that Measure of Grace God gives them, no doubt God would still advance them higher and higher according to their Correspondence; till he had brought them to a State of Salvation, though they had no Knowledge of the History and Letter of the Gospel. Their Good-Will would be imputed to them to Salvation, or as a way and means of Salvation, as St. Paul says, *Uncircumcision is reckoned for Circumcision* (b). What God requires of Men to fit them for his saving Operations in their Hearts, is neither Letter nor History, Opinions, nor Notions; but Humility, Submission of Heart to God, Resignation to him, the Desire of his Love and of every thing that is pleasing to him. When a Heart is thus disposed, God works in it either in this Life or the other, Light and Purification, and all the Graces he is pleased to pour into it. But if God finds any of them so well disposed, as to think it necessary to give them in this Life, even the Historical, Knowledge of himself, he would doubtless sooner work a Miracle than be wanting to them in such a Case. XIII. God takes care of the Pagans proportionably to their Correspondence. (b) Rom. 2. 26.

XIV. *Ex-amples of this.* XIV. It will be said, it may be, this is an IF, and a thing spoken in the Air. No, but it is not; and I could give many Instances of it. They whose Eyes are open to see the Excellence of the Writings of the divine *Tauler* will make no doubt but what the Ignorant *Laick* relates there, who converted this great Doctor, is a Truth that confirms what I say, and is so much the more certain as being the Case of that very Person who writ this Life. The Example is this.

(a) The Life of *Taulerus*.

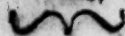
(a) *There was a certain Pagan, a very sincere and honest Man, living uprightly according to the Law of Nature: who every day lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, called upon him that made him and every thing, and said to him, O thou most High Lord, Maker of Heaven and Earth, thou knowest I was born in this Region and Country, and bred up in the Faith and Religion taught there. But now I hear, the Jews have another Religion, and the Christians another. Therefore, thou Lord that art above us all and hast created all things, I now beseech thee that if there be a better Religion than that wherein I have been instructed from my Youth thou wouldst be pleased to favour me with the Knowledge of it, and I will with all my Heart, embrace thy Faith and obey thy Commandments. But if thou deniest me what I ask, and I come to die in my own Religion, without knowing any better, to my thinking I have great wrong done me. This Pagan continuing to pray thus to God, it came to pass, that I writ a Letter to him, by the reading of which he was brought over to the Christian Faith.*

There is also an Example of this in the Lives of the Fathers, viz. of St. *Posthumius*: and in the Works of (b) Lib. 6. St. *Brigitte* (b) the Example of an Heathen Woman, Chap. 50. which I find so edifying that I will transcribe it. 'Tis this.

“ There is nothing more pleasing to God than to
 “ love him above all things. And I will let you see
 “ this by the Example of an Heathen Woman, who
 “ without knowing any thing of the Christian Religi-
 “ on, said thus to her self. I know very well what I
 “ am made of, how I was born: but I think it impos-
 “ sible for me to have had such a Body so artfully con-
 “ triv'd and compos'd of so many Vessels and Parts,
 “ having Senses so wonderful, had not some one so
 “ disposed it and given it to me: therefore there is a
 Creator

" Creator that has made me what I am, a humane
 " Creature so well proportioned and beautiful, and
 " was not pleased to make me a vile and deformed
 " Creature, as Worms and Serpents are. For this
 " Reason I believe, had I many Husbands, and they
 " all called to me, that I should rather run at the sin-
 " gle Voice of my Creator than at all theirs, I have
 " many Sons and Daughters, yet should I see their
 " Meat in their Hands, and come to know that my
 " Creator were hungry, I would be sure to take it
 " from them and offer it my Creator with the
 " greatest Joy. I have Goods and Possessions which I
 " dispose of as I please: but if I knew my Creator's
 " Will herein, I would readily forsake my own, and
 " would dispose of these Goods to the Honour of my
 " Creator. See now what God did to this Woman.
 " He sent her one of his Friends to instruct her in the
 " Christian Faith, and did himself visit her Heart by
 " his Holy Spirit, as it afterwards appeared. For
 " when this holy Man had taught her that God was
 " One, without Beginning and without End, and that
 " it was he that had made all Things, she answered, 'tis
 " very credible that he that made me and all things,
 " has none above himself that made him, and 'tis very
 " likely that he that has given me Life, has himself an
 " Eternal Life. And afterwards having heard that
 " this Creator had clothed himself with our Humane
 " Nature which he took of a Virgin, and had preach-
 " ed the Truth with his own Mouth, she said, cer-
 " tainly we must believe the Words of God, and be
 " by them led to the Practice of all sorts of Vertues;
 " and therefore I beg you, who are a Friend of God, to
 " tell me the Words that proceeded out of my Cre-
 " ator's Mouth: for I will quit my own Will and live
 " conformably to the Words of his Mouth. Upon
 " which this Man of God having spoken to her of the
 " Death and Sufferings of Christ, and of his Resur-
 " rection; she fell a crying, and said, Blessed be God,
 " who hath with so much Patience demonstrated on
 " Earth the great Love he bore to us in Heaven: and
 " therefore, if I loved him before because he created
 " me, I am now much more obliged to love him for
 " his shewing me the right Way, and redeeming me
 " with

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“ with his Blood. I acknowledge my self bound to
 “ serve him with all my Strength and with all my
 “ Members, seeing he spared none of his to redeem
 “ me. Lastly, I see my self obliged to renounce all the
 “ Desires I formerly had towards my self, my Goods,
 “ my Children and Relations, to desire only my Cre-
 “ ator in his Glory both in this Life and in that
 “ which shall have no End.

Were there many that thus heartily minded their Salvation, and addressed themselves to God to obtain the Means of it, they would soon find by Experience that God was not partial, and that his Providence watches universally for the Salvation of all. But if they are for the most part indisposed to make this good Use of God's Graces, to what purpose should God offer 'em to them? Should he do it only to make them, as Christians are at present, more rebellious, more wicked and more deserving of Hell? 'Tis certainly a great Effect of God's Love not to afford them these Strokes of his Grace, but to leave them in their Ignorance: besides that their being wholly busied about Earthly Things renders them incapable of understanding any thing in Divine Matters, should they be discovered to them. God gives them so many outward, palpable Graces, and such as are suited to the gross State they are in, and yet they understand not this Method of his, nor submit themselves to him in Gratitude and Love; how then should they understand the most sublime and spiritual Language of God, were he pleased to let them hear it? (a) *If I have spoken unto you of earthly and gross Matters and you understand me not, how can you believe if I speak unto you of spiritual, heavenly and sublime things, says Jesus Christ to Nicodemus?* Having in another place (b) spoken of the saving Means which God affords the Heathen, I shall say no more of it here.

(a) John
3. 12.
(b) Oec. of
the Restor
after Jesus
Christ,
Chap. 13.

XV. The
Answer to
the fourth
Difficulty.
How God as
to the essen-
tial, deals
equally
with all.

XV. To get clear of the fourth Difficulty, we must not confound what is essential or necessary to the Salvation of any one with what is only accessory, ministerial, and given upon the Account of others. Neither likewise must we confound what is essential to Evil with what is only accidental and external. As to what is good, God wills and provides what is essential and necessary

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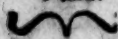
necessary as much for one as others of the Children of those that have corresponded, as much for *Judas* and all *Abraham's* Children as for *St. Peter* or *St. Paul*. He wills and likewise procures for them all what is necessary to destroy the Evil in them. But now if after this equal Provision some are grown greater Proficients in what is essential to their Salvation than others, and more removed from what is essential to there Damnation, this Inequality proceeds from their unequally corresponding, as has been said, without any Partiality in God.

But it is somewhat otherwise in accessory Graces, or in such Goods as may be called external and ministerial. As they are not intended for the personal Salvation of him that receives them, so God may give such, if he pleases, where he will, arbitrarily and purely of his own Will, without any regard to one's Corresponding more than another's; but yet in truth he always had regard to some Qualification or other in the Subject he thus makes choice of. To speak more plainly;

Gifts ministerial and accessory.

XVI. It sometimes (but extraordinarily and upon necessity) pleases God to grant Men some new preventing Graces, as the Revelation of some particular Truths, the conducting and directing of them in the right Way after such and such a particular Manner, and by such and such Means, and by the Instrumenty of such particular Persons. He must therefore give those he intends thus to make use of, some special and ministerial Graces, which I call *accessory* and outward, because they need them not for their own particular Salvation, but for the promoting the Salvation of others. Now these Graces cannot be given to all; not only because it would but breed Confusion should all set up for Leaders and Teachers; but also, because the Subject of these Graces must first be holy and regenerate, or at least wholly resigned to God. But if there chance to be more Subjects holy and qualified than God designs to make use of in such ministerial Employes; then may he out of many Persons equally qualified chuse which of them he pleased purely because he would, without the least Partiality, and pass by the rest; the Graces of any ones personal and eternal Salvation being not at all

XVI. In his accessory Gifts God has respect to the Dispositions of Persons, and not only to his own pure Choice.

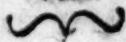
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all here concerned, of which those he leaves out have from him as great a share as those he makes choice of; but only ministerial Gifts, which are commonly so heavy and troublesome, that *Moses*, who had the most extraordinary ones of this kind, far from looking upon them or finding them to be of any Advantage to himself, was afraid of them, shun'd them, and three or four times refused them when offered by God himself; and complaining to him of this terrible Burden, he besought him he might be eas'd of it, and rejoiced when God took from him some of his Gifts and poured them upon Seventy other Persons; and he was sometimes so grieved and impatient as to let fall some Words that obliged God to shorten his Life. So that none have reason to look upon this as a partial Favour, were it bestowed only out of God's pure Will, without all regard to any thing else. Yet I am of Opinion that God even in these Cases has respect to the Dispositions of the Souls he employs, as well as to their Origin or Parents, and to the Prayers that any put up to him for them, but especially to the Habits and secret Bents of their Hearts. Hence it was that when an Apostle was to be chosen in the place of *Judas*, and when two were presented, both of them holy and well qualified, the matter was referr'd to God, and they prayed him to chuse one according to his knowledge of the inward Disposition of their Souls. *Thou (a) Lord, who knowest the hearts of all Men, shew which of these two thou hast chosen, to take part in the Ministry and Apostleship whence Judas by his transgression fell.*

(a) Acts
1. 24.

XVII. To
Persons e-
qually dis-
pos'd God
gives the
essential,
but not the
ministerial
and acces-
sory Graces
equally. The
Reasons of
this Diffe-
rence.

XVII. Thus even in these Cases God's Choice to extraordinary and ministerial Graces is not grounded on his bare Good-pleasure, and Acceptance of one Person before another: Yet it is certain there is a Difference between the Choice to Graces essential to Salvation, and the Choice to such as are only accessory and ministerial. The first God will at all times, from the beginning to the end of the World, give equally to those that are equally qualified. For Example, If before *Moses*, or in his Days, or after him, if in the Days of *Jesus Christ*, or after his coming in the Flesh, there were to be met with any Persons equally disposed towards God, for certain, God would have given them the



the same saving Graces in Substance; because such Graces depend not, nor are they annexed to Time or Place, or any outward Circumstances, but only to the Disposition of the Heart: Whereas the Ministerial Graces respecting some certain outward Persons, Places and Times, God gives them not out of these Circumstances to such as it may be had the same Dispositions as those have who live when the Places and other Circumstances meet. Though before the Holy *Virgin* and after her there had been Souls as pure as her self, yet 'tis plain they could not have all been chosen to the Privilege of being the Mothers of *Jesus Christ*. The same may be said of all the other Ministerial Graces of the Prophets, Apostles, and of such like Persons, which cannot be given to any, though equally prepared, but in such Circumstances of Time and Place.

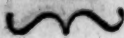
XVIII. But when the Time and other Circumstances wherein God is pleased to grant the World by the Ministry of others some preventing Graces, are come; he does not then ordinarily chuse, precisely such an Individual as *Peter, John, or James*, because he has so order'd it from all Eternity: but knowing well how many Instruments he will make use of, he looks then upon the Earth to see how Men stand dispos'd; and those he finds the best qualified he takes, and to them he communicates these extraordinary Graces, which he would not have given, nor will ever give at another time to Men of the very same Dispositions, because they will never again be proper and in season. Thus it is therefore that he chuses his Vessels of Election to his Ministry, such as are at that time best qualified, and according to their Disposition (a) *He gives to one five talents, to another two, to another one, according to every one's ability or capacity.* And if any one fail to correspond to these Ministerial Graces, he takes them from such an one, and chuses to entrust another with them that is better dispos'd, as our Saviour shews in the Parable (b). When God foretels and names sometimes before they are born, but extraordinarily, some Instruments he intends hereafter to make use of, 'tis because he has at that very time some under his Eye whom he designs peculiarly to honour, and who are so wholly resign'd to him, as he can by them through the Motions of his Holy

XVIII.
God's Impartiality
in his electing of
Persons to
extraordinary and
Ministerial
Graces.

(a) Mat. 25. 15.

(b) V. 23.

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XIX. *This is observable too in relation to the Heathen.*

Holy Spirit, have, breed, instruct and name the Children he will make use of just as he foretels it. And still this way is extraordinary, and in reward of the extraordinary Piety of some Holy Parents.

XIX. What has been said of the Choice of certain Persons to Ministerial Graces, wherein God, who may in that Case act purely at Discretion, without regarding the Dispositions of any, does for all that act so impartially and so justly, is applicable not only to such Choices as God has made among his own People, whether Jews or Christians, but also to such as he has made among the Heathens, as of a *Diogenes*, a *Socrates*, and an *Epictetus*, and of others, that were Instruments and Ministers chosen of God to enlighten and guide the Men of their Times according to their Capacities. God therein acted in proportion after the same manner, with the same Impartiality, Justice and Wisdom, as was observed he did among his own People. I have elsewhere (a) said something upon this Point in reference to the Heathen, and so shall say no more of it here.

(a) Oecon. of the Incarn. Chap. 13.

XX. *How God without any Impeachment of his Goodness and Impartiality, makes use of some wicked Men rather than of others to be the Instruments of great Evils*

XX. As for what concerns the Wicked, and the Choice God seems to make among them of some rather than others to be remarkable Instruments of some Evils, as were *Pharaoh*, *Absalom*, the Kings of *Assyria* and *Babylon*, *Judas*, *Nero*, and many others, I think I have shewn already (b), how God not only sought their eternal Salvation, but likewise how he ruled them in these very Instances; nor have we any thing further to know concerning them, but only why God so dispos'd of these wicked Men rather than of others whom he pass'd by.

To answer this Question, we must be sure to suppose the Truths above-mentioned, *viz.* First, That God had afforded them as well as all other wicked Men whatever, all such preventing Graces (not those of Correspondence) as were necessary to abolish their Sins, or to lead and prepare them for the Destruction of their Wickedness, which God heartily desired to see extirpated that so they might be saved. Secondly, That these wicked Men, and others like them, maliciously revolting against God and his good Inspirations, were resolved to give Life and Vent to their Malice and Corruption. Thirdly, Though they all deserv'd to be punish'd,

(b) Supr. Chap. 5. & 6.

punish'd, that yet God sees that unless he partly restrain the Floods of their Malice, they would quite destroy one another, and all the Good too.

Here it is that God interposes, and looking how far he intends either to protect or expose the Good and the Bad to outward Chastisements, if he finds that among the Wicked there are some of them more powerful, more cruel, more inclined to such and such Vices than others, and that supposing he puts Bars and Mounds to the Torrent of their Malignity on such sides and not on others, Men will then be chastised to that degree he designs they should, he does in a more special manner on some sides restrain some wicked Men, and leaves them open on others; and so varies their Ways and the breaking out of their Wickedness, as to accomplish his Judgments. Thus the Scripture calls *Pharoah*, and the King of *Affyria* (a) the Rod of (a) *Isa. 10.* God's Fury, the Axe of his Hand which he lifted up: 5; 15. not that God caused and stirred up his Wickedness, which on the contrary he would gladly have extirpated; but this wicked Person being himself unwilling to have it so, and pretending to make it fall upon whom he pleased, God takes this mad Horse by the Bridle, and stops his Course this way and t'other way, and gives him room but on such and such sides, so that he cannot stir outwardly but just where God leads him and Marks out his way. If God does set more Restraints upon other wicked Men as to the outward, I doubt not but it is partly because the Acts of their inward Corruption are not altogether so malicious, and they a little hearken (though very imperfectly) to the good Inspirations of God; and lastly, because too the Inundation of their Malice would be contrary to God's Design of protecting and upholding the World in some tolerable State, and of not yet laying it quite waste by punishing it any more, and this partly for the sake of the Good that are in it and for the Manifestation of his own Goodness.

C H A P. IX.

Of the Divine Providence in the Revolutions of States and Empires. The true Grounds of Civil Government.

I. How Di-
vine Provi-
dence has
presided o-
ver the
Principles
of worldly
Politicks
and their
Actuation.



THIS is of a very near Nature to what I shall say when I come to shew the Rise of these great Inequalities that happen in Empires and Monarchies, and a thousand Revolutions and different Events wherein the Nations and People of the World are concerned, and how all this accords with the Impartiality and Universality of the Divine Providence. God beholds the Corruption of Man's Heart, its Extent, Obstinacy and Progress: he has often had Experience of it; and by this, together with his Knowledge of the malignant Disposition of Satan and of natural and external Objects, he foresees that should he leave their Corruption to it self, it would immediately plunge all Nature and Mankind into Confusion by Violence, Murders, Plunderings, Robberies, Whoredoms and by all sorts of Hellish Disorders. This is the natural State of the Gentlemen the Politicians, wherein every one is against every one, and every thing is permitted to every one, and the strongest carries all; but it is by a Diabolical PERMISSI-ON and Malice, as far from the State of true and uncorrupted Nature as God is from the Devil.

God designing to prevent this hellish Subversion of all things, and set these Disorders into some Order, did not for that purpose appoint and allow that all should transfer this pretended Diabolical Right unto one Person, who might use it according to his own corrupt Fancy, and that his so doing should be the Principle and Foundation of all Justice, and that even 'tis God's Esteem too, as blind *Hobbs* that Factor for Hell has published to the World: but utterly disallowing all Mens corrupt Desires, he set Barriers to the Corruption of some more, and of others less, according

as he saw that from these different Restraints there would arise a System of a corrupt World, or of a Policy less disorderly, and more likely to preserve the Good, and to help the Wicked to forsake their Wickedness whenever their Will was disposed so to do. Chap. IX.

II. Thus They whose Corruption was less barricaded, stretched out, like cruel and ravenous Beasts, their Throats, their voracious Fury, their Ambition and Violence over all such as God left unguarded from them. The Great devoured the Less, and the Strong by mere devilish and wicked Ambition enslaved the Weak, so far as God suffered them; who still rules them at his Pleasure. By these methods it was at first that there actually arose Empires, Monarchies, Kingdoms and all these cruel Beasts that did constantly make it their Sport to sink and devour one another, as it is frequently figured to us by the Holy Ghost in Scripture and more particularly in the Revelations of the Prophet *Daniel*. But though this be in truth the rise of all worldly Policy, yet *Two* things must be observed; and I take notice of them the rather, because if I did not, some Slanderers might fancy I here give 'em but too fair an Occasion for their Calumnies.

II. The Source and actual Rise of great Bodies of Worldly Policy.

III. One of these things is this, that the Good being the Weakest, and seeing it is their Duty to work out their Salvation among these wicked Men. and also to endeavour to bring them over to God, and to convert them by the Example of a pure and holy Life, they must likewise be subject to them, *not only out of a Principle of Fear*, as the Wicked that are weakest are to those that are strongest, but also *out of a Principle of Conscience* (a), considering and reverencing the Hand, Direction, Ordinance and Disposal of God herein, who lengthens or shortens more or less the Chains of these cruel Beasts, and gives them a more or less spacious Field to range in, and leaves them such and such Passes open to punish other wicked Men that oppress the Good, and stops up others against them, that the Good may live in quiet. This Doctrine of submitting to the higher Powers is so true, that were they the most unjust Usurpers and cruelest Tyrants imaginable, yet would it be our Duty to pay them all Subjection in outward

III. The Good must submit heartily to the Higher Powers, tho' unjust.

(a) Rom. 13. 5.

Chap. IX. outward things; pay it them, I say, and the Officers and Ministers of their unjust and Violent Orders.

IV. *It is not permitted Subjects to kill a Tyrant.* IV. It is a most wicked Doctrine to teach, (as some States-Men do) that Subjects may lawfully kill a Tyrant. The Good and Bad too ought to pay respect to God's Direction, to his Executioner, and to the Servants of this Executioner, I mean to Tyrants and their Officers. It is God's Business to interpose here, and not that of the Subjects. And when God is pleased so to do, seeing the Beast grow too cruel, and that he would devour and swallow down all before him, he sets him Bars, and lets loose another cruel Beast to devour the first; and so successively, from Beast to Beast, one Beast devours another; and likewise according as God is pleased differently to place the Obstacles and Bars which he more or less sets in their way, one Beast is sometimes divided into many that from time to time eat up one another, as is divinely shewn in the Prophet *Daniel*. And thus shall it be till towards the end of the wicked World, when it should seem, that, one of these cruel Beasts, a Whelp of some Mighty One, shall arise and devour not only all other Beasts that shall be exposed to him as a Prey, but even the Good and Goodness it self, and shall set up the Devil and all manner of Wickedness even in the Temple and Worship of God himself, who shall then come and destroy this wild and enraged Beast by the Brightness of his Glorious Appearance; after this there shall be no more Beasts, but (a) *All the Kingdoms of the Earth shall become the Kingdom of God and of his Christ, who shall reign for ever and ever.* All this is set down, and that with particular Circumstances, in *Daniel* and the *Apocalypse*. Happy is he to whom the Holy Ghost shall give the lively and clear Understanding of this in its Season: I say the Holy Ghost, for it is in vain for Men to crack their Brains in commenting on these things before the time.

(a) Rev.
11. 15.

V. *Kingdoms and States are authoris'd of God, and one may preside in em in his Fear.*

V. The other thing which I said was to be observed is this, that we must not only distinguish between the Foundation of Monarchies and their present State, but likewise that we are not to confound that of God, as it was among the Israelites, with those of the World. Though the Foundation and Enlargement of the Monarchies of the World be nothing at all but Injustice,

justice, and the Title of Conqueror *be* but a hellish Chap. IX.
Quality and incompatible with that of a Child of God, yet when a State is either already settled by Descent or Invasion, God, to maintain things in as good Order as may be, and to avoid new and continual Confusions, permits and allows him that has the Government to continue in it, and invests him with Wisdom and Authority to issue out Orders and to see them obeyed. And when such a Kingdom or State is become Hereditary and Successive, those on whom it is devolv'd, and those that administer the Government in it, may innocently do it in the Fear of God, and may become and continue his Children, provided that in their Interiour and as to what concerns God and their own Souls they practise such things as have been explained in their proper place; and as to the Exterior, that they understand, that their Duty is to be God's Instruments which he makes use of to curb the Wicked, for fear they should swallow up the Good. I could enlarge upon this Subject, and shew the Plan of the whole System of it: but it would be a plain Digression from my Design. If therefore one or two Remarks that I have already made upon two or three Articles of it, as I went along be not enough I will add as many more.

VI. I may be here told, that to speak of Powers as I VI. *What*
have, is to speak too disadvantageously of them; that one *I have said*
I have a great Esteem for (a), and that has solidly hand- *was more*
led this Subject, has referr'd the Rise of Government *particular-*
to Vertue, and the Support of it to the Donation of a *ly with re-*
Princely and double Portion of the Spirit which God *spect to im-*
gives to some for the governing of others. I answer, *moderate*
That I speak not of the Power it self, and much less of *and con-*
what Men might have done either out of Love to God, *quering*
or from the most regular Instincts and Dictates of Na- *States.*
ture, in setting up the wisest amongst them and those (a) *Mrs.*
that were fittest to rule the rest. No doubt but God's *Bourignon,*
Blessing and Favour accompanies such Establishments. *in a Trea-*
But what I have said is with respect to such, who be- *tise of*
ing at first invested with a moderate and limited Power, *hers a-*
did afterwards abuse it; and by usurping an unlimited *gainst the*
Greatness and Force, which had no other Rule of Acti- *Quakers.*
on but their Appetites and Will, gave Birth to these
great and cruel wild Beasts, such as were the four cele-

Chap. IX. brated Monarchies, which instead of being well-order'd Bodies of Sheep and Lambs, were nothing but furious Lions, enraged Bears, Leopards and Tygers, and such like ravenous and murdering Beasts, as may be seen in *Daniel*.

VII. *The
vain Foun-
dation of
Politicks
laid down
by many.*

VII. I have oftentimes admired the Ignorance and Ridiculoufness of most of those that go about to give Systems of Polity, and to explain the Source and Nature of the States and Empires of the World. They did not so much as know the Bottom of what they were to treat of, nor the End it aimed at, nor what Form was to be given it. Some have gone upon a Supposition that all Men were by Nature good, or at least that it was the End of Political Establishments to make 'em so; and thus they build us in the Air a *Plato's Republick*, that is of no Use but in a World of Romances. Others, as *Hobbes*, do in Effect suppose, though they do not expressly tell you so, that all Men are wicked, and then take this Wickedness for the Ground and Principle of natural Right and Justice; and then upon this Principle of I know not what chymical Right, they fall a telling us strange Stories, that Fear first united Men and call'd 'em together to quit this same curst Right and make it over to some one Person, who being invested with it, becomes, as he shall fancy, the Rule of Just and Unjust; so that whoever shall from this time pay Obedience to the fantastical Laws of this pretended Oracle, is truly just and pleasing to God, &c. which is all meer Satanical Dotage.

VIII. *These
Powers are
not ordain-
ed to settle
Religion
by their
Strength.*

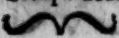
VIII. Others lay this down, That Secular Powers were establish'd to promote the Kingdom of God, to be the Guardians, as they say, of the Two Tables, to make Men serve God, and to reduce 'em to Obedience to him: which are very dangerous Principles, and proper to make Men Oppressors of Conscience, Sacrilegious and Hypocrites. There might indeed be some colour for this were we under a Theocratical Government, such as was that of the Jews in the Times of *Moses* and the Judges, where all was done from the Mouth of the Lord, who did not extend the Right of outward Power but to outward Matters, and to a Worship that was undoubtedly of his own establishing. But since he has himself abolished these Institutions, and
now

now requires only that his Servants worship him *in Spirit and in Truth*, and has left both this and all External to Man's own Choice, in States purely Civil and Worldly, where the Will of Flesh and Blood, and the Will of Man, and even the Will of the Devil himself is most commonly taken for the Will of God; in these, I say, to go to extend humane Right and Power to what concerns Man in Relation to God and eternal Salvation, is a plain Disorder, Encroachment, and Usurpation, and High Treason against the Majesty of God.

IX. Man, who was created in an Angelical State, is by the Fall become as corrupt and as incapable of doing good of himself as the very Devil. This Diabolical Matter, corrupted within and without, is that which God is pleased to take again into his Hands, to see if he may yet make it an Angel, not by means of all the Powers of all Mankind, that can do no more here than the Powers of the Devils can; but by his Light, his internal Motions, by his Love, by Faith Divine, and by all Kinds of Spiritual Operations, joined with the Co-operation of Man's Liberty.

IX. The Difference between God's Spiritual, the Church's Ministerial, and the Magistrate's Civil Power.

This is what the Nature, the Subject Matter, and the Form of GOD's KINGDOM consists in; It is a bright and benign Will and Power that gently insinuates into a piece of Diabolical Matter, which freely resigning up it self to God, does by his Operations upon it at last become Angelical. When God is pleased to make use of any exterior Means to this Purpose, 'tis by sending some to speak to Men and instruct them, and by Prayers, Exhortations and Remonstrances to beseech them to silence the Diabolical Corruption of their Hearts, and to hearken to and receive the Voice and Operations of God within them. The Ministerial Power of the Church, is a State that for its Subject, Nature, Matter and Form ought to consist of Persons moved of God, entreating corrupt Men with all Mildness to give Ear to God in their Interior, and to desire the Descent of his Grace into their Diabolical Hearts, that by it they may be changed. Such as freely correspond to these two States (the Divine and Spiritual, and the Ministerial) and submit themselves to them, these become Subjects and Children of God, and re-enter

Chap. IX.  ter into their Angelical State: but such as correspond not to them, abide still in their Corruption and Diabolical State, and yet during this Life God waits for their Repentance, and leaves some good Men amongst them to assist them in it. And that they may not destroy the Good, nor take away one anothers Lives and Quiet by the Overflowings of their Corruption, God, to prevent their losing the only Opportunity of their Amendment, has erected humane Powers after such a manner as was said before.

X. *The Nature and Duty of Powers.*

X. And thus; the Subject wherein Worldly Power resides, its Nature, and the Matter it is concerned about and the Form it is to introduce into it, are contained in this Proposition; *That Humane Powers are Persons of the World who by a Principle of Force and Constraint are to watch over corrupt Men, not by their Force to change them or make them inwardly good and vertuous, but lest the Diabolical Corruption of their Heart should so break out as to disturb and destroy the Good, or take away from the Wicked that Life and Quiet, which they may yet, if they will, employ in working out their Salvation.*

XI. *The Duty of Powers with respect to Mens Spiritual State.*

XI. I do not deny but Magistrates may be Holy Persons, nor do I say it is not their Duty to endeavour to make Men Vertuous; but as Magistrates they need not be the one, nor as such will they effect the other. All Force and outward Constraint must here be laid aside. and nothing be done but by Remonstrances and Exhortations, leaving every one free to be Vertuous or Wicked, provided they give no Disturbance to any one. Considering the present State of the World, a Magistrate ought to be very well satisfied when his Subjects live orderly and quietly, and that they do no wrong, though as to what concerns God and themselves they be never so wicked, erroneous and corrupt. The most he can of right do, is, to quit his Government of them, or let them alone, or rather to procure them unquestionably good Means of Salvation, and leave every one to his Choice whether they will make use of them or not, to remain still Children of the Devil or become Children of God as they please; this not directly affecting the State: on the contrary, should all become Children of God, this would be the Destruction and End of all States: not that the Good

Good would ever fail in paying Subjection and Obedience to their Sovereigns; but the Sovereigns themselves and all the World being become Holy, they would freely with all Humility of Heart submit themselves to every one, or rather all would be subject to *Jesus Christ*, who would then be a most Glorious and Wonderful Monarch, making all his Subjects so many Kings and Princes. But this belongs to the Transactions of the other World. In this, Magistrates ought to preserve their Right over Men, and keep them in Order as wicked as they are; for indeed the wicked only are the Object and Matter of Civil Government: The Good are concerned in it only by Accident and as Strangers; and were there none but good Men, so far would they be from lording and compelling, that every one, as was said, would be disputing Subjection with his Brother, to which humble and hearty Contest God would by his Divine Love give Regulations and an happy End. But among the Wicked we must take other Measures.

Chap. IX.

XII. When I speak of wicked Men continuing such with all their Accomplishments that fit them for Society, I mean it of a real Wickedness, by which they are so in God's sight, and not of a Civil Wickedness. There is a vast Difference between true Vices and Civil ones, between true Goodness and *Virtue*, and between *Virtue* and Goodness purely *Civil*: and this ought to be exactly distinguished, lest otherwise we should fall into Pharisaism, and into that fatal Blindness of Spirit that has almost overspread the World. In a well ordered Society Men ought to be Vertuous, Honest, Just, and Chaste, and many really are so, without having the least Grain of *Virtue*, *Honesty*, *Justice* or *Chastity*, in God's Eyes, who searches the Heart, and Centre of the Soul, before whom we become not Just and Vertuous but by the rough way of *Purification* before noted (a).

XII. The Difference between true *Virtue* and *Civil*, between true *Vices* and *Vices* against *Civil Society*.

In the Civil or Political Sense we cannot without wronging them call a great many Men Wicked, nor deny them to be Men of Probity and Honour: but in the Divine, God knows, and all whose Eyes God has opened know too, that were these Good and Honest Men but to have a View of themselves in the Light Divine, they would see themselves with all their

(a) Occ. Co-oper. Chap. 5, 6.

Chap. IX. Probity nothing but abominable Sinks of all the Filth of Hell. And this is true of every one that is not regenerate, however trimmingly his old *Adam* may be dressed and adorned as to Civil Society, which concerns not it self with inward Corruption though never so Devilish. He may be as great a Villain and profligate a Wretch as he will, and yet go for an honest Gentleman, if his Wickedness has no ill Aspect upon the Civil Interests of others: this makes one Civilly vertuous, but really and in Divinity, a Child of the Devil and of Hell; but with this Difference between other extravagantly loose Fellows and these that can for Humane and Civil Respects keep under their Passions, that these are better disposed to hear, if they will, the good Spirit of God in their Interiour when he calls them: who if they listen to him will teach them a Vertue, Justice, Chastity and Honesty, and indeed a whole System of Morality of quite a different Strain and Genius from what the Polity of the World ever yet taught.

XIII. In
all Affairs
and Revolu-
tions re-
gard must
be had espe-
cially to the
Direction
of God.

XIII. But to return to the Revolutions that happen in States, I think I have said enough to shew how in their Beginnings, in their Duration, in their Changes and in their End, they are under the just and universal Providence of God, to which principally, and almost solely we should have regard in all sorts of Affairs and Revolutions: Not but that Humane and Politick Prudence and Firmness, the Malice, Artifice and Counsels of Men have their Share in them; but they are no further concern'd than God is pleased to let loose the Reins, or to curb them more or less by Obstacles laid in their way. And hence it is that some are stout and others stupid, some daring and others heavy and drowsy, some successful and others unhappy in all they undertake. *The Princes of Zoan are become Fools, the Princes of Noph are deceived, they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the Tribes thereof.* And how comes this? *The Lord hath mingled a perverse Spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof as a drunken Man staggereth in his Vomit.* This is what the Politicians ought to observe, who fancy they can penetrate and unfold every thing, that they can undertake and execute every thing by their own Strength,

Isa. 19.
13, 14.

Strength, Application and Foresight, not thinking of Chap. IX. this Saying of God which is address'd to them, *For it is a Day of Trouble, and of treading down, and of Perplexity by the Lord God of Hosts in the Valley of Vision, (Jerusalem, corrupt Christianity and the States thereof,) breaking down the Walls, and of crying to the Mountains.--- And ye have seen also the Breaches of the City of David, that they are many, and have gathered together the Waters of the lower Pool: and ye have numbered the Houses of JERUSALEM, and the Houses have ye broken down to fortifie the Wall. Ye made also a Ditch between the two Walls, for the Water of the old Pool, But ye have not looked unto the Maker thereof, nor had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago. And in that Day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and to mourning, and to Baldness, and to girding with Sackcloth; and behold Joy and Gladness, slaying Oxen and killing Sheep, eating Flesh and drinking Wine; let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die. (We shall not live always. nor shall we still have Opportunities to take our Pleasure; e'en let us take it now while we may, and while all things are at our Command and Disposal.) And it was reveal'd in mine Ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this Iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts.*

Isa. 22. 5, 9, &c.

CHAP. X.

Of the Truth and Certainty of Divine Predictions and Prophecies, and of their Accomplishment.

I.  L L that I have hitherto been treating of may serve to explain as fundamentally and as fully as is requisite, this considerable Difficulty which was proposed in the very first Treatise, and though upon several Occasions presented to us, was still put off till now; I mean the Difficulty touching Divine Prophecies and Predictions

I. The things preceding serve to reconcile Liberty and Predictions.

which

Chap. X. which seemed incompatible with what we had said concerning Man's Liberty in the Government of himself : for such Liberty seems to destroy the Certainty of an antecedent and foretold Determination ; and reciprocally, the Certainty of a Prediction seems to take away the Liberty of Indifference, which is the only true Liberty.

II. Objection. Tho' God puts Obstacles to the Eruption of the Malice of wicked Men, yet are they free for all that.

II. But perhaps it will be objected that even what I said but just now concerning the Manner how God bridles the Malignity of the Wicked, and concerning the Obstacles he opposes to its breaking forth, seems to take away from them, or to tie and constrain their Liberty. I answer, that in my Opinion, did we but well understand wherein Liberty consists and wherein it does not, that it does not consist in a Power of applying one's self to all sorts of Objects, but in a Power of varying the Acts of one's Faculties about Objects when present, and not of extending them to Objects that are absent, we should at the same time understand also that the Liberty of the Wicked is always preserved entire, though God hinder such and such things from presenting themselves to them.

And indeed, what Difficulty is there to comprehend, that Man, who since his Fall has nothing in him but Darkness and Evil, nor any thing else without him, could not but be inclined to Evil, though he were free to vary these his Inclinations after a thousand different Manners? That, God having after all this, presented him by his Grace, as well inwardly as outwardly, his Light and his Good, he was then free to encline himself either to Good or to Evil, and to do it a hundred and a hundred different ways : but, that supposing he would chuse Evil and would stick to his Choice, in this case, he should be then determined and actually not free for the present, and indeed habitually determined for the future ; and so not free morally, though absolutely speaking he may change if he will : but howe'er this be, and however determined he be to Ill, this is, first an Effect of Liberty ; and in the second place, he can even in the Evil he has chosen diversifie his Desires a thousand various ways at pleasure. Now though God hinder the outward Eruption, or the external Effects of his Desires, yet is not the inward Liberty which

which he has, to will this or that, to desire passionately if he pleases this or t'other thing, taken from him. Chap. X.
The Devil whom God chains up to prevent the outward Effects of his Desires, is not for all that the less free to will and desire inwardly whatever he pleases, God no way concerning himself with the inward Regulation of his Thoughts and Motions; but he either covers or removes the outward Objects which this Enemy would pour out his Rage upon, or else, leaves them open and exposed to him so far as the Wisdom and Justice of his ever to be adored Providence judges convenient.

III. We must not confound the *inward Liberty* of the III. Not-Mind to dispose of its Faculties, with the *outward Act*, withstand- about all sorts of Objects at Discretion. God touches ing the not the first in wicked Men, but the other he orders; Barriers not by decreeing that the Liberty of such and such God sets a shall be carried to such Acts so circumstantiated, but gainst the by leaving certain Objects naked on such and such sides, Exterieur of wicked and likewise certain Roads and Ways to come at them; Men, they are still in- upon which, the Devil and wicked Men, who are con- ternally Corruption, never fail to steer the Course of it thither. free, and

In this very bursting out of their Malice they have a indeed ex- thousand Occasions of acting with Liberty: for in one ternally and the same thing, in a Circumstance and Action that too. is still the same in Substance, there are a thousand things that are merely incidental, a thousand other Actions and Circumstances not necessary and indifferent, in which there is still left room for Liberty. For Example; supposing *Pharaoh's* Pursuit of the *Israelites* through the Red Sea was as to the Substance of it limited and circumstantiated by God just as has been said, yet still would there be a thousand things purely accessory, wherein *Pharaoh* might use his Liberty as he pleased: as were the Thoughts of his Mind, their Order or Disorder, the Posture and Motions of his Body, his marching with such or such an Equipage, the marshalling and ordering of his Forces and his Guards as he fancied himself, and a thousand other Particulars, which it were ridiculous to imagine were limited by Divine Decrees, or indeed by any particular Sight God had of them.

We

Chap. X. We must moreover remember the Difference there is between the free Actions of wicked Men and those of the Devil: 'tis this, that wicked Men as long as they are in this World may, if they will, (as absolutely speaking they may by the Grace of God which is always offered them) they may, I say, by their Liberty turn from Evil and give themselves to what is Good. But in this Case, for one wicked Man that would not be any longer an Instrument of Wrath to execute some Evil or other, a thousand others would readily offer themselves. For neither God nor the Devil will ever want Instruments to work with; and whatever happens, God's true and substantial Purposes shall never miscarry. Which will be more clearly seen when I shall have spoken of the Divine Prophecies and Predictions.

IV. Before the Fall the Predictions concerning the substantial Design and Works of God were absolute and infallible: But what was accessory could not be so foretold.

IV. To speak with good Grounds concerning the Certainty of Things foretold 'tis necessary to observe first the Nature of them. Though every thing that is not God himself be accessory to him, yet among these accessory Things considered in themselves there are some that are *essential to God's Design*, and others that are *accidental or incidental only*. As God wills absolutely the doing such Things as are Essential to his Design, so he may foretel them because he absolutely wills the doing of them: but as those that are accidental to it do more or less require the Intervention of Man's Liberty, and so their coming to pass is not of absolute Certainty, but only of a moral and conditional one; so likewise are the Predictions and Prophecies concerning them. To give Examples of this.

To delight himself in Body, Soul and Divinity with Men upon the Earth in Glory, is the *Essential* of God's Design: this shall absolutely be done; and God will by his Power cut off all that opposes this Design of his. Hence God has foretold and prophesied absolutely in all the Prophets, that he will come and reign in Glory with Men on the Earth. This Prophecy and Prediction is of all, without exception, the most essential, the most absolute, and the most certain.

It is accidental to the Design of God, and to the essential Completion of it, that Sin should happen, and that Man should oppose God. It was possible and easy

easy and more pleasing to God that the essential of his Design and Work should have been accomplish'd without the Intervention of Sin rather than by it. Granting this, (upon Supposition too that God had already the Idea of Sin by the Fall of the Angels), this Event cou'd not be absolutely foretold before Man's Fall; it being a thing neither absolute, nor necessary, nor essential to God's Design or Work; but on the contrary, as was observed, God wou'd without this accessory Event of Sin, have attained the Accomplishment of his essential Work much sooner, and easier, and in a way much more pleasing to himself. Therefore did not God before the Fall foretel to Adam his Sin and his Punishment but only conditionally; nor indeed was the Certainty of it any more than conditional.

V. But after the happening of this Incident of Sin, God going on with the essential of his first Purpose, and constantly confirming the Certainty of it, did moreover make use of two kinds of middle Works, or Means to remove the Obstacles that were accidentally laid in the way to his principal Design. The first of these Works is in Scripture called (a) *The Work of God*, as being his own proper Work; and it consists in his offering Divine Lights and Motions to Man, and also outward Means to drive sin from his Heart. Upon this, God's principal Design is in a fair way of being fulfill'd. The other Work of God is in Scripture called (b) *his strange Work*, and his *strange Act*, to which he is not us'd; and it consists in this; that when a Person or Nation, or the World in general, will not resign their Liberty to God and let him bring forth in 'em his Light and Divine Motions, nor leave off sinning, he then cuts them off from the Earth, which he afterwards purifies, and comes thither with the good part of Mankind to accomplish his principal Design; which he has so certainly foretold as to assure us, that it should be by this that Men shou'd acknowledge him to be the True God, and shou'd in times to come glorifie him by swearing (c) by *The God of Truth*.

V. After
Sin the Es-
sential of
God's De-
sign still re-
maning,
the Obsta-
cles to it
may be re-
mov'd by
two sorts
of Ways or
Works.

(a) Jo. 6.
29. and
Chap. 11.
4, 5.

(b) Isa.
28. 21;

(c) Isa. 65.
16.

VI. Now

VI. Tho' it be a thing of no Importance to God how his purpose be accomplish'd, yet does he chuse the way of his Work of Love.

VI. Now 'tis observable, That it is a Thing of no Moment as to God himself, by what way he compasses his first Design, whether directly, without the accessory Event of Sin, or Sin happening; by the way of his proper Work, or of his strange Work. It is a horrible Fallacy to think that either God or his Glory needed the Intervention of Sin, or that this Divine Glory requir'd the Way of God's strange Work rather than of his proper Work. On the contrary, God wish'd only the Way of Uprightness and Holyness, and abhorr'd the Way of Sin, which he endeavour'd to prevent by doing whatever was feasible on his part. And after Sin happen'd, he does and always will endeavour to attain his main End by the means of his proper Work, without the Intervention of his strange Work.

VII. Predictions of Good and Evil: how God stands affected towards em.

VII. And therefore it is that in Scripture he proclaims and foretels Good after such a manner as plainly shews he wishes all Creatures, even the most wicked, *Babylon* the Harlot and her Daughters and Inhabitants would comply with, and be healed by his Work of Love: and that when he denounces and foretels Evil, whether particular or universal, he gives evident Tokens of his Displeasure at it, that he wishes it might not be so, and seriously invites the generality of the Wicked to avoid it, being always most ready to spare them; that being as possible (a) and as pleasing to God, and in it self indifferent; not to say that it more directly contributes to the accomplishment of his main Design.

(a) See Chap. 4. § 9.

VIII. These Predictions are not of absolute and physical Certainty.

VIII. Now since Men are free either to admit or not to admit the Operations of God, and to give place either to his proper or his strange Work; the Predictions concerning these things are not of absolute, physical and infallible Certainty, because absolutely speaking these things may go otherwise, and God for his part wishes they may do so.

IX. Different Degrees of Certainty in Predictions.

IX. What then is the degree of Certainty of these Predictions, and whence have they it? There are several sorts of it.

The First.

1. *First*, The things God will absolutely do himself may be foretold with an entire Certainty: such as are the Offer of the Lights of God and of his Graces both inward and outward, the Calling the Gentiles and all Nations, and the like.

2. *Secondly*,

2. Secondly, Particular Persons being free, it cannot *The Second.* be foretold as a thing absolute and of necessary Futurition, and physically infallible, who they are that will and will not correspond. And so all the Predictions and Prophecies of this kind, the Promises and Threats of future Good and Ill, supposing Man's Correspondence, which is free, are, properly speaking, conditional; though proposed never so absolutely, whether touching good things which God gives upon Correspondence, or Evils which he threatens. It is the part of Man's Liberty to make himself at his Choice the Object or Subject of these Goods or Evils, and to gratifie God; who rather wishes the Good than the Ill.

Yet because God knows the Thoughts and Inclinations of Man, the Strength of his Habits, Satan's Methods of acting and tempting, the physical Influences of the Heavens and Elements upon Man, the Impression on all this makes upon our Souls, how the corrupt Soul follows the Tide of its Passions, Inclination, and Temper, in a word, the Impressions of Nature and of Flesh and Blood; all this, together with the Knowledge God likewise has, as far as he pleases, of the Obstacles he will put in the way, and of the different Course he will give the breaking out of Man's Corruption and its Acts, this I say enables him to foresee and foretel, when he pleases so to do, what will come to pass with as great Certainty, as it may be foretold, that one who is habituated to such a Vertue or Vice, and going into a place where he will meet with Objects that will awaken his Habits, will exert Acts that are proper to them.

X. This last kind of Certainty, though not absolute, X. *How* is yet so great that it comes very short of that which is *great the* conversant about Events of absolute necessity. And indeed, is it not certain, or within a very little, that a *moral Certainty of* Drunkard and Glutton almost choaked and starved, *Predictions* coming where all sorts of Provisions are at his service, *is.* will as certainly cram and make himself drunk, as if he did it only by Mechanism and Necessity without the least Degree of Liberty. Yet it is still true, that absolutely speaking, he might by using his Liberty do otherwise: but how seldom does this happen; Can one find one in ten thousand that does it? For He must use

Chap. X. use a great Denial of himself and his corrupt Appetites, and he must offer to himself mighty Violence, before he can do it; and this makes the Case so rare and so difficult, but yet is it not impossible.

Hence it is that notwithstanding all the moral Certainty of these Predictions, yet those of Evil may not come to pass, would Men but do their Duty in denying themselves, as God desires and commands they should; and those of Good may not be fulfilled to them, unless Men answer the Conditions on which they were tacitly founded; and still in this case, God would make them good towards some others.

XI. *The Predictions of Good cannot but be fulfilled, those of Evil may not.*

XI. For there is yet this difference between good and ill Predictions; the good if we consider them in themselves shall assuredly have their Completion; for though some particular Persons to whom they were addressed may deprive themselves of the Benefit of them by not observing the Terms they were given upon; yet will God ratifie them towards others that shall submit to the Conditions: whereas Predictions concerning Evil may absolutely have no outward and formal Event, would but all correspond to God's Calls, who would not need to look out, or raise up others to accomplish upon them the Predictions of Evil. He would be very well pleased could he find none such.

XII. *There have been Divine Predictions without their Event*

XII. Upon this it may after all be asked, *first*, Whether there ever were such Predictions as were not accomplished. And *secondly*, If upon supposition the Event of such as concern Evil never did, nor never were to happen, this wou'd not destroy, I do not say the Truth of Predictions (for I have already (a) answered this) but the Designs of God upon Men? I answer the first Question by the Examples of Scripture it self, wherein we see Prophecies and Predictions of God, as well in matter of Good as of Evil, whereof the Event never happen'd to those Persons to whom it was declar'd. See what God himself says to *Eli* (b), *I said indeed* (and that is resolvedly enough to foretel a thing) *that thy House and the House of thy Father should walk before me for ever. But now the Lord saith, be it far from me, for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed: behold the day cometh that I will cut off thine arm, &c.*

(a) Supr. Chap. 4. § 7.

(b) 1 Sam. 2. 30.

As for Predictions concerning Evil, there is the famous Prophecy of God against the *Ninevites*, that was denounced absolutely, (c) *Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed*: which yet did not so come to pass. Chap. X. (c) *Jonah* 3. 4.

There is a formal Prediction which God expressly sent to King *Ezekiab* by the Mouth of the Prophet *Isaiab*, whom he commanded to tell him from him, that he was sick unto Death, (d) *Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order for thou shalt die and not live*. And yet this through the Prayers of that pious King came not to pass. (d) *Isa.* 38. 1.

XIII. It would be superfluous to alledge other Examples. These shew the Truth I am establishing evidently enough to such as are teachable: but as for the indocile, who will understand nothing but what they have already got in their Head and are resolved there to keep it, all the Examples in the World, all the Declarations and the very Oaths of God himself cannot satisfy them. If the same God, who has sometime sworn that *he would not the death of Sinners*, even after he had foretold it them, and who assures them that this Prediction may not come to pass, and that that is what he desires, should now come and swear in the most express Manner possible, that the Doctrine of a Predetermination determinate, infallible and immutable as to particular Persons and Events, were a false Doctrine; and that Men notwithstanding any Prediction concerning their Life or their Death, have the Liberty by the Grace of God to save themselves, or through their own fault to damn themselves, and that none of these Predictions is of infallible Event; such strongly prepossess'd Persons would not believe a word of it. They would look out Distinctions to wrest the Words of God were they never so plain, and make him say, white is black: and such they would easily find out; for nothing is more easie than for a Heart, that is dark and loves its Errours, to deceive it self, especially since Art has been added to corrupt Nature, and that for fear they should want Means to deceive themselves, Men seem for no other end to have encouraged Study in all Parties but to get Belief to their Doctrines, and to disguise the Errours they are resolved to embrace under the Mask and Appearance of Truth. I think I have (a) somewhere prevented

(a) Supr: Ch. 4 § 124

M

prevented

Chap. X. prevented the Cavils some might raise here, upon the Difference between Divine Predictions, and Promises and Threatnings: and so shall pass on to the second Difficulty.

XIV. *Tho' none of the Predictions of Evil ever had or ever shou'd come to pass, yet wou'd it not derogate at all from the Completion of God's Purpose.*
(b) Supr. Ch. 4. § 8.

XV. *Sin is not necessary to the fulfilling of God's Purposes.*

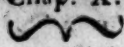
XIV. Supposing the Divine Predictions, for Example, those concerning Evil (for they fall most under our present Consideration) should not come to pass, would not God's Truth be thereby impeach'd, and would not the Construction and Oeconomy of his Designs thereby be travers'd and defeated? I answer, that the very contrary to this would have happened: and I think I have above (b) shewn, how if the Evil foretold had never come to pass, the Predictions would then have attain'd their true End and their most perfect Accomplishment, and that then God's Design had been compleated the noblest and shortest Way. And this is made more intelligible from what has been said of God's main and substantial Design, and of his proper, and his strange Work.

XV. Men have foolishly and unhappily conceited that it was an essential part of God's Design to have it brought about by such ways wherein Sin and Corruption should have their parts, and that without these oblique ways God's Design would miscarry. All perfect Mistake this! God has infinite ways to come to the Ratification of his Purposes, and none of these ways require Sin, but Purity only. Nevertheless Man having opened this unhappy and strange way, God, to finish his Design is pleased to endeavour his Recovery by his proper and Divine Work; but as, when Sinners are resolved to pursue obstinately their own Courses, God is pleased to restrain them, he is also pleased to forestel their Evils, but so and with Design; that if Men do their best, these Evils shall not befall them. If they do not befall them, then God's solid and main Design always standing firm, God would accomplish it by a hundred other ways of Purity; and so only the oblique way of his strange Work would thereby become impracticable: which would be so far from displeasing God that it would be his and his Angels Joy, and would give him an Opportunity of accomplishing his grand and only essential Design much sooner and more agreeably, and in a more directly glorious and happy Manner

Manner than otherwise. I will explain this by some Chap. X. Examples considered hypothetically.

XVI. The Prophets had foretold that *Jesus Christ* XVI. An
should be rejected and put to Death by the Jewish Na- Example
tion. No doubt the Rejection and Crucifixion of the with rela-
Son of God were great Sins in those that were guilty of tion to the
them, and consequently, there is no Question but God Evils that
did most seriously and heartily desire that neither the were com-
Jews, nor any other Persons should commit this Sin, mitted in
and that it was for this End that he caused so many putting Je-
Truths to be Preached to them, and did them so much sus Christ
good by his Son, whom he sent to them expressly and to Death.
directly to soften them, and to make them bring forth and
render to him the Fruits of Righteousness, and not to give
them occasion to kill him; as appears as clear as the
Day by the Parable (a) of the Servants sent into the Vine- (a) Mat.
yard to gather the Fruits of it, and at last of his well be- 21. 33.
loved Son, whom the Father of the Family sent likewise
on the same Errand, with Intention and Desire that they
shou'd reverence his Son: *It may be, says he, when they
see him, they will reverence him.* But when God had,
upon his Resolution of this Embassy, foreseen the wil-
ful Obstinacy and Rage of the Jews, and that neverthe-
less the Salvation of good Men required *Jesus Christ's*
Presence in the Flesh to draw them out of their Igno-
rance, then God consented it should be so though at the
Expence of his Son's Persecutions and Murther, and
upon Supposition of this wilful Obstinacy of the Jews,
he foretold their Crime particularly enough.

Let us suppose now, that, seeing absolutely speak-
ing, the Jews were free and might change; and that
the Certainty of this Prediction was not inconsistent
with their Change, suppose we, I say, that in effect
they had not rejected nor killed the Son of God; what
would the Consequence of this have been? *First*, God's
Design and his most direct Intention towards the Jews,
which was that they should be converted, and bring
forth Fruit and live and honour his Son, would have
been accomplished. *Secondly*, the Son of God and the
converted Jews would have been employed to call and
convert the dispersed Israelites, as well as the Heathen,
where they would have met with other Enemies, and
other wicked Men, who would either have been con-

Chap. X.  verted or not. If we suppose they wou'd not have been converted, then would *Jesus Christ* and his Followers be in a fair way to be persecuted and crucified according to the Tenour of the Prophecies; but if we suppose they would have been converted, then would God, according to his most earnest Desire and his most direct Intention, have compassed his End without the Intervention of his strange Work, and the great Crime which Men would otherwise have committed in killing his Son. The Essential of God's Design would then have been most perfectly accomplished without the Mediation of so many Sins so odious in God's Sight, and without the strange Operation of the Effusion of divine Wrath upon these Murderers and Rebels, and without the Damnation of so many Souls which God had created for Salvation, and which he wished them above all things. Yet for all this; would not *Jesus Christ* have been absolutely without his Cross and Sufferings, nor without an inward Death in the bottom of his Soul occasioned by the Sins committed against God from the Beginning of the World; and if any one had then desired an Interpretation of all those things that were prophesied of him, he might have found them all spiritually and mystically in him, in the Wicked, and in the Good.

(a) Occ.
of the Re-
stor. be-
fore the
Inc. Ch.
15. § 9.

In this Case, will some say, the Redemption of Man might have been wrought without *Jesus Christ's* bodily Death. I have in another place (a) said what is necessary to satisfy this Difficulty.

XVII. A.
another Ex-
ample, up-
on supposi-
tion that
Men being
converted,
the general
Plagues
fall not up-
on 'em.

XVII A second hypothetical Example of what I assert may be this. Suppose we that the great Predictions of the Reign of Antichrist, of the Corruption and Extermination of the great Whore, and of beastly Christendom never come to pass, because Christians to escape the dreadful Punishments hanging over their Heads, and to please God, should become truly converted (for 'tis in this case alone that the Evils foretold may not come to pass, and without this their Event is as certain as any Truth in Mathematicks, as are generally all sorts of Predictions of Evil excepting in the case of Repentance): if therefore in such case, the Predictions concerning the great Whore and her Excision did not come to pass, what then? What Inconvenience wou'd

wou'd it be if through so holy a Means they were not Chap. X.
 ratified? Would God be deceived? No, for he fore-
 saw that absolutely speaking it was possible these things
 shou'd not happen, and that they wou'd not come to
 pass but upon supposition of Man's Impenitence.
 Would he have missed his Design? His direct Design
 is only the Salvation, Sanctification and Glorification
 of Men: the rest is only his foreign Work, not intend-
 ed by him, and which he would willingly forbear. If
Babel wou'd be converted, the Desire of God and Angels
 wou'd be fulfilled, and God's principal Work, would
 be in a fair Preparation of being speedily accomplished
 by the directest way. The Destruction of *Babel* and
 of all its Accomplices would be fulfilled in the Interi-
 our: *Babel* wou'd be destroyed in the Souls of Men; its
 Abominations, its Poms, its Strength, Life and all
 that belongs to it would be cut off by the Sword of
 God's Word, and consumed in the Fire of his Love,
 and that not without Torment (though to Salvation)
 in her true Purification, wherein all her Sins, Mon-
 strousness, and Wounds wou'd be laid open.

XVIII. If it be said, these are but the Fooleries of XVIII.
 some Mystick Divines; I answer, This Reproach is
 but a piece of Impiety of wicked and ignorant Men. *The Answer*
 The internal things of the Spirit are before God so *to a scold-*
 much incomparably more real than external things, as *ing Re-*
 can't be express'd. It is certain God makes more *proach.*
 Account of the spiritual and mystical Death of one only
 Soul, that is to say, of the extermination of the old
Adam, and of Corruption out of it, than of the Death
 and Excision of a thousand wicked Men, nay, than
 of all the wicked Men in the World. If (a) *there* (a) Luke
be Joy in Heaven for one Sinner that repents, there 15. 7, 10.
 would be Abysses of inexpressible Joys if *Babel*
 could be mystically and spiritually exterminated, with-
 out needing to be stricken outwardly, and to be cast e-
 ternally Body and Soul into the bottomless Pit. O how
 pleasing would this be to God! But seeing she will not,
 though God uses all Means possible to bring her to it,
 he consents, upon her diabolical Obstinacy, that the
 Works of her Hands shou'd fall upon her; which will
 certainly sink her, except she return to God, as she
 might if she wou'd. When all is done, God will finish

Chap. X. his capital Design, which can never miscarry, whatever Diversities and Differences, whatever Variations Men may occasion in his accessory Ways and Methods.

XIX. *The last Example taken from what befel the Jews.*

XIX. The last Example is one that God himself helps us to. He had foretold to the *Israelites* that were in *Egypt*, that he wou'd bring them into the Land of *Canaan*: and *Jacob's* last Will is fill'd with Predictions of what should befall each Tribe. Nevertheless, in the Wilderness, God was just going to cut 'em all off but *Moses*; and had certainly done it but for his Intercession. What wou'd then have become of the Predictions, and of God's Purposes concerning the Jewish Nation? I answer, That God wou'd have executed 'em a hundred other ways; one of which he makes known

(a) *Exod. 32. 10. to Moses (a), Let me alone, and my anger shall wax hot against 'em, and I will consume 'em; but I will make of thee a great Nation.*

XX. *There remains now, one would think, no more Difficulty in these Matters.*

XX. I know not, after all these Truths, of any just Ground of Difficulty in this matter, unless it may be, some will say, that to understand things in this Manner necessarily supposes in God mutable and temporal Modes of thinking and conceiving, and such as are variable according to the Differences of times: to which Difficulty I know (if I may dare to speak with any Assurance) I know, I say, I have answered fundamentally in the first Treatise (b), which the Reader may consult if he pleases. Had God been pleased to remain in the Abyss of his own Eternity wherein there is no Duration nor Succession, he wou'd never have made any Creatures. nor have manifested himself to any: But being pleas'd to manifest himself to Creatures that are durable and their Acts successive, and being pleas'd also to correspond and Comport with them and their Acts, this does in the Nature of the thing imply in him the Will to suit the arbitrary and free Acts of his Good-pleasure to them, to their Duration and their Succession. This in my Opinion ought to satisfy, though I had not (c) before suggested, that *Jesus Christ*, God-Man being the Person presiding over Divine Providence, and the Execution of God's Designs, it is no wonder if in him there be succession and diversity of Thoughts.

(c) Chap. 5. n. 6.

XXI. I was tempted to set down here by way of Re- XXI. The capitulation of the preceding Matters, what is in the *Sum of* Apologetick Preface to Mrs. Bourignon's Life from the *what has* 170th Page to the 175th, and to cite what the sublime *been said.* John of the Cross says about Predictions and their Events in the 19th and 20th Chapters of the Second Book of his *Ascent to Mount Carmel*: But without transcribing any thing, I chuse rather to content my self with the bare Citation I make, and here to end the first of the three things I designed to treat of in this Book, which will be easily understood if we but well consider, that nothing is necessary to God but himself, his Image, and his Love; and that all things else are to him indifferent, arbitrary and accessory: That he having been pleas'd accessorially to frame Ideas and Things, his principal and direct Aim in this his arbitrary Pleasure was to communicate to his free Creatures his Felicity, by and upon a faithful and holy Correspondence on their Parts; that, Sin intervening merely by accident, and against God's Intention, 'tis all one to God how Sin be remov'd, and that it is more pleasing to him, and more agreeable to his Desire, that it be taken away by the Conversion rather than by the Destruction of the Subject it is in. And lastly, that, however it be, God will be sure to attain what he arbitrarily design'd with his Creatures, which Design of his nevertheless is no way essential to him. This fundamental Scheme well comprehended will take away the Difficulty of all the rest.

C H A P. XI.

The Advantages and Proofs of this System of Grace, Providence and Liberty; and the insufferable Inconveniencies of other Systems.

I. The Connexion of what went before with what follows: Some Reflexions upon this System in reference to the Universality of Grace.



THINK I have all along hitherto given a System of *Divine Providence* sufficiently compleat, and have shewn how it agrees with the Universality of Grace, whereof I have likewise shewn the Nature and Operations in the preceding Tracts. I once thought I shou'd do well to prove now designedly this Universality: but having done it already from many original and solid Heads in the foregoing Treatises as the divers Subjects there handled gave me Occasion, I shall confine my self to some short Reflexions upon this System of Providence and Grace, and beg the Reader to consider with me these Three or Four Things, which, if I mistake not, are enough to assure us of the Truth of any System.

Five Proofs and Advantages of this System above others.

1. The *First* is this, That all sorts of Considerations, Divine and Humane, all sorts of Testimonies, of God, Conscience, and Nature, lead us to our System.

2. The *Second*, That this System satisfies all the Attributes of God, and the whole Duty of Man.

3. The *Third*, That it is absolutely impossible to find any Way but this, to answer all these and a thousand more Difficulties.

4. The *Fourth*, That all other Systems are so far from satisfying Truth, that they are inexhaustible Sources of the grossest Falsities imaginable.

5. The *Fifth*, That our System has no Difficulty peculiarly belonging to it; and that none can be objected against it either from the Nature of things Divine or Humane, or from the Testimony of Scripture, to which it does not plainly and clearly give a satisfactory Answer, and which are not according to it very false in themselves.

II. (I.)

II. (1.) In effect, to run over each of these Considerations again, if it be remembred what was shewn in the first Treatise, we cannot but observe that all the Considerations of God's Nature, of his Purposes and Decrees, and of the Creation, do jointly tend to convince us, that God made all Men only to be eternally happy. I remit you to the Considerations that make the Twenty Eighth Chapter of that Treatise, and am sure one cannot after that reasonably question this Truth: for thence it appears that the Constitution of the Nature of every one of us and our Creation is not really distinct from the Destination of every one of us to supreme Happiness, and from the direct Way to the actual Attainment of it.

All (but *Spinoza* and some of his Atheistical Followers) are agreed that God made all things for some End; that he has given them a *Nature* and *Faculties*, by which they are carried towards, and do attain that End; which when they have attained, they are in a State of Acquiescence, of Joy and Rest, of Content and Happiness; for then they enjoy what they were made for. God is the End of all things, but especially of Man. But God is no dark, tormented Being, full of Rage, Sadness and Desolation; but he is Light, Peace, Joy, Love and Delight. Therefore the End of every Man's Creation is a bright, peaceful, joyous, delightful Life; in a Word, eternal Life is the End of every Man's Creation. And as for Man's *Nature* and *Faculties*, they principally consist in Sentiment or Life, in the Desire, the Understanding and Liberty: the Objects of Life or Sensibility, are what is pleasant; of the Desire, Good; of the Intellect, Truth; of the Liberty, an infinite and undetermined Reception and Enjoyment of Good: all which are God himself and Eternal Life: for the Pleasant, the Good, the Truth and the Infinity of Good is God himself. It is the same thing for God to will the Creation of, and actually to create a living and sensible, a desiring, intelligent and free Subject, as to will and actually to make a Subject whose Nature and End shall consist in its being carried to an infinite Sentiment, Knowledge and Love of God, that is to say, in being destined to be happy, and that to all Eternity; since its End and its Faculties are of an immortal and eternal Nature,

II. (1.)
God, his
Nature, his
Design, the
Creation,
all declare
the Truth
of this Sy-
stem.

Chap. XI. Nature. Therefore are all Men destined and created of God to be freely and eternally happy.

III. Other
Proofs of
the Truth
of this Sy-
stem.

III. Let us consider, that God could not draw him- self other Ways, nor frame another Image of himself than as he is, bright, glorious, happy, and peaceable, and perfectly harmonious with himself. Let us ask our Conscience, and consult the Words and Conduct of God, even since the Fall, how he received Man into Favour again presently after his Sin; and how, lastly, this his Favour and Grace was extended to all his Descendants, he offered it to him when they were yet in him and the same thing with him, to the end that (according to St. Paul's way of reasoning) (a) the Root being received into Favour, the Branches might be so too; and the first Fruit being recalled to Life, the whole Lump might be so likewise. The Care and Effects of Providence towards all, the Offers of inward and natural Means to all; the Offer of extraordinary Means to some, by them to call the whole World; that every Man is with God's Assistance put in a Capacity of Salvation; the Consideration that this Life is in the Nature of it a Time of Deliberation and Trial whether we will chuse Life or Death; the Love, Dignity and Merit of the Mediator, which are infinite and above all Conception; that of his Power, greater to save than the first Man's was to damn us; lastly the Consideration of a thousand and a thousand Graces of Prevention and Correspondence which he has shed and continually does shed forth upon his Creatures, do nothing but lead us to this same Truth which is attested by all the Scriptures, and that by God's own Swearing and Oath, as well as all the Writings of such Holy Persons who have enjoyed the Light of God in its greatest Purity. And when God threatens, when he promises and foretels Good and Evil, and at the same time exhorts Men to qualifie themselves to partake of the one, and to avoid the other, and even to prevent their falling out, this all leads us manifestly to the System we have been proposing of Providence, of the Provision of things to come, and of Man's Liberty.

(a) Rom.
11. 16.

IV. (2)

IV. (2.) But if there be any thing that demonstrates IV. (2.)
 the Advantage of this our System, it is its perfectly sa- *This System*
 tisfying all that God's Attributes and Man's Duty re- *agrees with*
 quire. The Power, Infinity, Independence and Commu- *all God's*
 nicability of God, require, that in case he be pleas'd to *Attri-*
 communicate himself actually, that he create a Subject *butes, and*
 free and independent of every thing but it self in its *with all*
 Determination of it self; just as we have propos'd it. *Man's Du-*
 God's Justice requires the same; otherwise God wou'd *ties.*
 not render to every one according to their Works,
 their Operations, and their respective Choices; but
 according to the pure and simple Measure of his own
 Will independently on Man. The Wisdom of God
 exacts that he make nothing but what is conformable
 to himself, to his Truth, his Holiness, his Love and
 Acquiescence; and therefore, that he make neither
 Nature, nor Faculties, nor Means, but to be conform-
 able to himself, to his Truth, to his Love, Holiness
 and Blessedness. The Holiness of God is infinitely re-
 mote from Sin and from consenting to it, nor can we
 have a purer Conception of it, than by acknowledging
 that God has neither decreed, will'd, nor permitted Sin,
 and that he neither made nor so much as had any
 Idea of it before it actually happen'd; so far was he
 from willing the Damnation of some as a means to ma-
 nifest his Justice, since Damnation includes Sin, which
 God wills not, and without which Hell and all the
 Torments of it wou'd be turn'd into infinite Delights.
 The Charity of God cannot suffer him to forsake Man
 tho' fallen, if he be but in a Capacity, thro' his Grace,
 to re-enter into Happiness. His Impartiality, Equality,
 and Constancy will not suffer him, if he goes on still
 with his Design of making 'em happy, to let it fall as
 to more than the half of Mankind, and that for Rea-
 sons grounded on himself. He shou'd both appear and
 really be lovely in the Eyes of all Men, for as much
 as it is the Duty of all Men to love him; and all
 ought to find in considering him, Causes of Love, of
 Humility, of Comfort and Hope, and Encouragement
 to go on bravely with the Work of their Salvation, as
 well as of Fear and Trembling.

And

Chap. XI. And all this our System fully answers, which maintains that Grace is universal ; that it may be gain'd and lost ; that the Promises and Threatnings, the Good and Evil foretold may be escap'd or executed. If the Events come to pass, then 'tis Grace that does a'l, and our Liberty that admits its Operations ; if the Evils eventually happen, then it is because Man freely turns away from the Grace of God, who heartily wills the preventing of Man's Misery, but wou'd not force his Liberty.

V. (3.)
*This System
 opens the
 only way of
 coming out
 of all Diffi-
 culty.*

V. (3.) 'Tis what well deserves our Notice, and is the *third* Thing to be reflected on ; that there is absolutely nothing else that can satisfactorily answer what we have said concerning God's Designs, the Creation, his Divine Attributes, the Duty of Man, nor a thousand other Difficulties relating to these Matters, except that Way only which we have taken, which is to acknowledge God's Grace, its Universality, and Man's Liberty either to receive or reject it, without being either way determin'd saving only by himself. If you deny but any one of these things you will be able to explain nothing at all of God's Designs, nor of his Dealings with Men ; you will be able to give no Account either of God's Attributes or of Man's Duty. All becomes immediately indissipable Darknesh, as I may say. To deny God's Grace is Pelagian and Atheistical ; to deny its Universality and Man's Liberty, is to throw one's self into the midst of all the Darknesh and Difficulties imaginable, whence we shall never get out with all our Efforts, except we own this Point, that the Goodness of God is universal, and that Man's Liberty is indetermin'd and indeterminable by any thing but Man himself. This last Article, against which the rigid Predestinarians stand most upon their Guard, is so indispensably necessary, that if we start never so little from it, all the old Difficulties return upon us in Shoals. If we in the least allow that God antecedently and infallibly determines Man's Liberty, all the Murmurs, Absurdities, and Falsities that follow from this Concession rally again and invincibly keep their Ground. Yet ought we not to be indifferent whether we leave them in the Minds of Men or no ; they being most of them so many Blasphemies against the Honour
 of

of God. Why therefore will not Men yield to the Chap. XI.
Way we propose, it being the only one that can dissipate them, that being absolutely impossible any other way whatever?

VI. (4.) My *fourth* Consideration is this, that all other Systems are so far from answering Truth and all the Phenomena's of it, that they are the Sources of enormous Difficulties, and of Consequences plainly indefensible. I need not (to convince you of this more particularly than I have already upon divers Occasions in the preceding Tracts) examine here all sorts of Systems and Methods upon this Subject: we may satisfy our selves with the Consideration of three of them, with relation to the three Articles of ours, which are, *Divine Grace*, its *Universality*, and *undetermin'd Liberty*. Some Systems deny Grace, others the Universality of it; others Liberty; or at least something wherein it is concern'd.

I will not insist upon the first, which is that of the *Pelagians*: I have sufficiently shew'd the Abominableness of that; and indeed it is a System more becoming Atheists than Christians.

As to their System who make the Grace of God particular, there being many sorts of them, or rather those of this Opinion taking divers Methods, some the Supralapsarian, others the Sublapsarian, or the common, or that of *Amyrald*. I shall not stay long upon these Diversities, nor upon shewing, that after all, should one press the Sublapsarians with the Consideration of their Doctrine concerning the Decrees, the Determination and Action of God upon second Agents, and even upon our Liberty too, they must necessarily come over to Supralapsism. Nor will I look upon their System on its ugliest side: But will consider it only on that side which they shall not complain I have disguis'd, as owning it themselves; viz. That God did not create all Men to save them, and that it was his Will to redeem but some of the whole Race of Mankind fallen in *Adam*.

VII. The first of these Positions is incompatible with the Nature of God's Decrees, Designs and Acts, with the Creation and the Nature of its End, with that of the *Creation*.

Chap. XI.

VI. (4)
All other
Systems labour under
indefensible
Difficulties.

The Pelagian
System.

The different
Systems of
Particularists.

VII. Difficulties in
the System
of Particularism

with respect to the Creation.

Chap. XI. the intelligent Creature, of its Faculties and their Use. Were that true, God wou'd not have made himself the Scope and End of all Creatures. He wou'd have dislik'd himself as to his being the supreme and sole End, and wou'd have prefer'd the Absence of himself and his Image to their Presence; which surely none dare say. I might here add all the Considerations laid down in the Twenty Eighth Chapter of the Treatise of the Creation, which must all be false, if this Proposition be true, viz. That God did not create all Men to Salvation.

The Absurdity of the Supralapsarian System. It implies a Contradiction.

These Consequences are more especially strong and unavoidable with respect to the Supralapsarians, from whose Doctrine there follow yet other monstrous Absurdities; for were it true, that God's sub-ordinate End in Man's Creation, was to damn the greatest part of them, that so he might attain his chief and main End, the Manifestation of his Glory; he must therefore needs think it good (in quality of a Mean) and also will that Man shou'd reject, be ignorant of, hate and blaspheme God with infinite Rage and Torment: for Damnation is nothing but the utter Rejection of God, Darkness in the Understanding, Hatred in the Will, Blasphemy, Rage and Torments in the Affections and Sensibility of the Soul and Body. Now to will all this for one's Glory and Pleasure, is just what the Devil wills, who thus pretends to damn Men for his Glory and Pleasure. A Man cannot without Horror think of attributing such Abominations to God.

It implies a Contradiction.

I add, that to say God created Men for this End, that part of 'em might be damn'd for his Glory, implies a Contradiction: For Damnation is a State of Trouble and Disquiet: on the contrary, the Nature of Rest and Acquiescence consists in this, that it is the Result of a Subject when it attains the Means, the Ways and the End to which it was destin'd by its first Cause. Whence it follows that Souls destin'd to such Means, such Ways, and such an End, whatever they be, cannot be miserable when they have attain'd 'em; they being then in the Ways and in the Centre, God, they say, destin'd them to. Therefore is it a vain and contradictory Fancy, to hold that God created Souls for certain Means and for a certain End, and that these Souls, though

though they have attain'd their End, may yet be Rest- Chap. XI.
less and in Torment.

VIII. The other Assertion of the Doctrine of Parti-
cularism, viz. that it was not God's Will to redeem
all Men fallen, does not only not answer the Truth of
God's ways, nor of his Attributes; but is indeed directly
contrary to them. It accuses God of Inconstancy and
Change, of a limited Goodness, of Self-Contradiction,
of Cruelty, Partiality and Falshood, of disapproving
himself, of more Love or Inclination to Sin than to his
own Holy Image, of Deceit, Lying and Hypocrisy; it
makes Men desperate or presumptuous, profane, Li-
bertines, loose and careless; it extinguishes in them all
Piety, all Love of God and their Neighbour, all Prayer
and Faith and every Vertue, and sows in them the
Seeds of all manner of Vices whatsoever.

VIII.
Great Difficulties
attending
the System
of Particu-
larism in
respect of
our Re-
demption.

In the first place I say, that according to this Doctrine
God is accused of *changing* his Design, at least, in their
Opinion, who dare not deny but God when he created
them at first willed the Salvation of all Men: but say,
that upon the Fall God wills only the Salvation of
some of them; whence it follows that of himself God
did not continue in his first Design towards all, but in
part only, and that he changed and quitted it as to the
Bulk or greater Part. God's Goodness would likewise
be but very narrow, if it extended but to a Part of fal-
len Men, and that much the lesser too; I could easily
conceive a much greater Goodness, viz. such a one as
extended to all; therefore I should have in Idea a
Goodness greater than God had in Reality. Which is
absurd.

God would likewise *contradict* himself: because hav-
ing once implanted and still raising in all Men an Incl-
ination and Desire of Truth, of Goodness, of Happi-
ness, and even of Repentance; if notwithstanding all
this he had made an Act and Decree not to pardon
them, his Acts wou'd thus be contrary and opposite
one to the other.

He wou'd also be *cruel*, or wou'd take pleasure in
the Misery and Torment of his Creatures, if having it
in his Power to will the Salvation of all Men, and to
offer it to all, he refused to will and procure them a
Good so much in his Power, and to remove an Evil
which

Chap. XI. which we take to be so easily removeable; and all this only because it is his Pleasure it shou'd be so; though if he pleased, he might easily decree and do otherwise. Therefore wou'd he take pleasure in the Torments of his Creatures only because he found it pleasant so to do, which is the very Essence of Cruelty.

He wou'd be visibly *partial*, if of Subjects equally disposed he took some and passed by others, if he treated them unequally, especially where the Disproportion is so dreadful as it is between the Salvation of some and the Damnation of others, and this merely because he was pleased to do so, without all regard to the antecedent Dispositions of these Subjects.

He wou'd likewise be a *Deceiver*, if, though by the Voice of Nature, of Conscience, and Scripture he protest he wills the Good, the Repentance and Life of all, he yet shou'd have a contrary Will.

He wou'd likewise *disapprove of himself* if he were not willing his Image shou'd be restored in such as it might be restored in; or if having it in his Power by Redemption to render all Men capable of receiving his Image he wou'd not do it but in regard of a few. He must therefore needs approve of the Absence of his own Image in Subjects where it might be; and so wou'd dislike his own Presence, and wou'd take more delight and Love in the Absence of his Image (which Absence is in Man Sin) than he wou'd have Inclination to his Holy Image; that is to say, that with regard to the greatest part of Men *he would prefer Sin before Holiness*.

Besides, the whole *Procedure* of God, his *Instructions*, *Exhortations* and *Commands*, his *Promises* and *Threatnings*, and the whole Content of the Scripture which speaks of all and to all, at least to all that are called, and even to the most hardened Sinners and to such as perish, declaring they shall receive Good if they hearken and obey, and Evil if they refuse, wou'd be nothing but a Heap of *Lies* and *Deceits*, of *Hypocrisy*, and *Delusion*, if all this while God in Truth meant it but for some few. 'Tis said God does seriously and in good earnest propose to them the Nature of Good and of Truth, and if they do this, such and such things shall follow: which is to say, that God shews them in
Speculation

Speculation and in the Air Truth and Good, and lets Chap. XI.
 'em see the Consequences of 'em, and the Connexion of
 the Premises with such Consequences: but all this while
 there is nothing for 'em. God explains Logick to 'em, the
 Nature of the Consequences of general Propositions,
 καὶ ὅτι ὅλα πρῶτον, and they that mind not this Logick
 Lecture, this vain and speculative Theory, wherein
 they are not at all concerned shall be more culpable
 and more deserving Damnation than they were before.
 What Absurdities are these! and what a pity would it
 be, shou'd these poor Hearers of Logick, or any other,
 fancy themselves once to be some of the particularly
 predestinated ones!

Then they need but follow the most natural Logick
 in the World, and they will easily thence draw Con-
 sequences to make them *presumptuous, Libertines*, pro-
 phane, full of Security, little upon their Guard, negli-
 gent and remiss. But if they think themselves repro-
 bated, besides the same Dangers of Prophaneness, Liber-
 tinism and Impiety to which they lie open, they run
 also great hazard of *Despair*.

It is to lessen the *Love of God* in Men, and to render
 him *hateful* to the greatest part of them, thus to make
 him merciful but to the smallest Number of them.

It lessens the *Love of our Neighbour* to represent more
 than the half of Men as objects that God neither loves
 nor wills the Salvation of; whence it will follow that
 none are obliged to love all Men or all their Neigh-
 bours, since our Love ought not to be larger than
 God's, whose Love we ought to imitate.

It destroys all *Prayers*, to believe that God has abso-
 lutely disposed of Mens eternal Good and Ill, antece-
 dently to our Prayers and independently on them.

It makes void *Faith*: for how can I believe the Pro-
 mises of God, and set my self to embrace the good
 Things he shews me, seeing they have been offered
 thousands as well as me, God never intending for all
 that to give them to them.

Lastly, It fairly offers at the *Destruction of all manner of*
Vertues and at the planting and raising all sorts of Vices,
 as is easily deducible from the Reasons just now touch'd
 upon.

Chap. XI. If it be said, that Experience does not verifie this, but rather the contrary in those that hold this Doctrine, supposing it St. *Augustin's*: I answer, that we are not beholden to the Doctrine of Predestination for this, but to the Doctrine of immediate and inwardly operating Grace, which those Persons humbly embrace, and which serves them as a Counter-poison to hinder the dire Effects the Doctrine of rigid Predestination wou'd have were it entertained by it self, and the Consequences of its desultory Visions closely followed through all their Inconsistancies: for nothing can be more whimsical and fuller of Contradictions than this Doctrine is. Some Men are destined to Life, others to Damnation, out of pure Humour: and these are more heavily damned if they reject the Means never designed for them; and if the other reject them, all shall be made up to them again by an imaginary Imputation and a strong fancyful Faith. If the one do but once believe, they are presently sure they shall persevere; if the other chance to believe, it signifies nothing, their Faith shall be but *temporary*: the Ill of the one shall turn to their Good, and the Good of the other shall in the End turn to their Ill. I shou'd never have done shou'd I reckon up all the Absurdities this Doctrine swarms with.

IX. Difficulties in the System of Particularism in relation to Providence and Liberty.

IX. But those that spring up from the third Head of this System of Particularism, from what relates to Providence, to God's Determination and Inflexion of our Liberty, and the like, are altogether as extravagant. I shall press them only with one of them, and that is this, that if God determines all Events and all the Particulars of them, if he does efficaciously influence and determine every thing, even our very Liberty; if he infallibly and indeclinably bends it (to follow the Language of the Schools) I then say, that not only there is no such thing as Liberty, but what is more, that there is no such thing as Holiness in God, and that he is the Friend of Sin. But if it be true, as it certainly is, that God and his Will is the supreme Good, and Sin the highest Evil, God must necessarily have an infinite Aversion to Sin. And if God have an infinite Aversion to Sin, therefore is every thing that is in God infinitely removed from Sin. Therefore ought
his

Divine Power effectually to evidence this infinite Aversion to it, or infinitely exert Acts of Aversion to Sin; that is to say, do all it cou'd to hinder it and to oppose it. So likewise God's Consent, Will and Permission must needs be infinitely remov'd from it. Has he an infinite Aversion to a thing, who can, yet will not hinder it, but wills it, decrees it, permits it, approves and likes it shou'd exist? These Difficulties, which in our System vanish like a Shadow, I wou'd fain have any one try to resolve by the common one; and I confess if they can, that Miracles are not ceas'd. Nor will I urge them with this, that following this System of theirs it is impossible to explain how God exhorts Men not to deprive themselves of the good Things he foretells, and to escape the Evils prophecy'd against them, this is inexplicable the common way, and is to be done only by supposing, that notwithstanding the Predictions of them, they may yet either come or not come to pass.

X. All these and many more Difficulties that I omit; but more especially such as concern God's Love for the Salvation of Men, and his Aversion to their Damnation, and to Sin which is the most essential part of it, have made all such as have enjoy'd God's pure Light speak of rigid and particular Predestination with Abhorrence and Execration. A Monster this which Mystick Divinity, the purest and brightest of all, knows nothing of and utterly banishes. There you may see in a hundred Authors, and in as many Places, that Man is free to let Grace operate or to reject it; there you may see that if *Jesus Christ* cou'd but hinder the Damnation of one only Soul by coming and dying again for it, and by displaying all the Effects of his Power and Goodness, he wou'd not fail to do all he possibly cou'd. There have been some Holy Souls (a) whom God expressly commanded to declare to Men, that the Doctrine of Predestination, was a Diabolical Doctrine and expressly contrary to the Gospel, which aims at the Salvation of all Men.

Mrs. Bourignon, who had the Spirit of God in so high a Degree, was us'd to say of the *Jansenists*, some of whom were her Friends, (b) They go to reform the Church, the Babel, but it is with Errors, among all which there never was a Worker.

Chap. XI. *greater than that of Predestination; and of Labadie and his Followers. that were her Enemies, and put out a Book against her wherein they have carried these Matters to an excessive Supralapsism, and where they shew they have Stomach enough to digest Iron, Fire and Flames, Reprobation, Sin, Hell with all that dire Train; I hold nothing agreeable to his Sentiments; he is stiff for Predestination; and I, for my part, take it to be the most pernicious Doctrine in Christendom (a).* I could

(a) Salu- produce a great many like Testimonies of other Per-
tary Ad- sons (b), who had undoubted Marks of receiving their
vices. fons (b), who had undoubted Marks of receiving their
Lett. 22. Lights immediately from God; but I think it not ne-
cessary, for that, the most equitable Persons that yet
(b) Vide hold particular Predestination, do without that, freely
Vossii Hi- own they are very sensible of the Difficulties and the
storia Pe- grievous Consequences of it, and cou'd they any other
lag. Lib. 7. way get rid of them they wou'd not stick to quit their
Part 1. own, provided this new way they must take were not
it self Subject to the same or greater Difficulties.

XI. *The* XI. This, or something like it, is what I have read
Equity of with Pleasure in a famous Author who has writ one of
some that the latest upon this Subject. (b) *Is there any Man of so*
are for Par- little Sincerity as to say he finds no trouble at all in this,
ticularism. and that he can easily shew how this agrees with God's hatred
of Sin? To speak sincerely, it must be own'd, that we cannot
(b) Judg- here answer any thing for God that will satisfy and silence
ment up- the Reason of Man. And it is true, considering the Me-
on the thods that have hitherto appear'd; the Author gene-
Methods rously owns it of his own, and impartially declares in
of Provi- favour of any one more commodious, cou'd he meet
dence and Grace, p. with it. I remove, says he, as well as possibly I can these
91. and (invidious) Consequences from my System: but yet I find I
301. cannot do it so well as I wou'd. I meet with things in God's
Conduct that I comprehend not; and I have much a do to
reconcile his hatred of Sin with Providence; and this Thorn
is so troublesome to me, that if any one will pull it out, I
will immediately come over to him, and will sacrifice to him
my Idea of a Being infinitely perfect (c).

(c) Ibid. Our System requires not so much of him: and I pre-
p. 63. tend by it to take away this and all other Thorns, by
shewing the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect in its own
Brightness more than any have yet, so far am I from
sullyng in the least that glorious Idea.

This

This, it may be, is but Presumption to think so. Chap. XI. But too, were it really so, where were the Presumption to say it? Or is it Presumption to endeavour such a thing? Men of Sense and Equity will not say so; and they cannot but approve a Design which I will with Pleasure express in the clear Words of the fore-cited Author. (a) Every one is in quest of such a way of explaining Providence and Grace, as will save the Holiness and Justice of God, and entirely secure them; as will leave Man in full Liberty, and make him the sole Author of his Miseries, so that not the least of them shall be laid upon God. A good Design this; and if any one be able to find out a Method that shall perfectly execute this Design, and remove all my Difficulties, I do here declare my self on his side. For there is no one more uneasie under these Difficulties than my self. But before I quit my Party, and St. Augustin's School, I must wish him to do me these two things. The first, not to cast the least blot upon the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect: The second, that he absolutely and entirely take away all these Difficulties and leave not so much as one. For if after having carried me over into one of these milder Methods he leaves me charg'd with the very same heavy Weights I was before, 'tis plain I am cheated, and he has not been so good as his Word. I had been as well left where I was before. I say therefore in the first Place, that these softening Methods must leave me my Idea of an infinitely perfect Being whole and entire, for I cannot go from it if I would. 'Tis to no purpose to heap Difficulties upon Difficulties, I shall never be made to believe (1.) that an infinitely perfect Being is ignorant of any thing; (2.) that he may have inefficacious Wills; (3.) that he may will a thing and yet not do it; (4.) that any thing happens in the World that is not within the order of his Providence; (5.) that he is in any dependance on Creatures; (6.) that he is oblig'd to follow them and to work pursuant to their capricious Humours; (7.) that the Creature is independent on God; (8.) that it can resist his Will and hinder the Execution of his Purposes.

XII. Nothing can be more reasonable than the Demand here made, that Satisfaction be given to these Difficulties by that Method which shall be pretended more commodious than others. I think whoever understands the System and the Truth of all the preceding

XII. All these Difficulties are solvable by our System.

Chap. XI. *ding Tracts, will easily perceive that by the help of them these Difficulties appear none at all, and even that in divers Places I have given Answers to the Substance and thing it self, if not to the very Terms of them. But there being others still behind in the Solution of which I intend to spend the rest of this Treatise, I will begin with a Word or two concerning these, and then set down the other, and first, those drawn from Reason, and after those from Scripture.*

C H A P. XII.

A Solution of the preceding Difficulties according to our System, That the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being is by it preserv'd untouch'd and entire.

I. The first
Difficulty
concerning
the Perfection
of
God's
Knowledge
and his
Foreknowledge.
The
Answer.



"I. T is contrary, they say, to the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being to be ignorant of any thing, viz. of things future; for a Being that knew things to come and penetrated into future Eternity, wou'd be much perfecter; therefore I cou'd conceive something much perfecter than God, viz. a Being that knew all things.

I have many things to say upon this Point. First, The Idea of the infinite Perfection of a Being, necessarily requires that this Being be perfect by the sole Idea and Knowledge of himself and of himself alone, and excludes the Necessity of any other Knowledge whatever, of any other Object and of any other Idea: for these things, or the Idea of them cannot be necessary to this perfect Being, except this perfect Being were imperfect without them, which is a Contradiction. If it be said that this perfect Being that is Self-sufficient with the Knowledge of himself only, does by this necessarily know his own Power, and by Consequence the Objects of this Power, all creatable Beings and all their possible Modes; this is to say nothing.

God

God knows his own Power by the Consideration he has of it, that if he be pleased to go out of himself whatever he pleases shall be done, but he does not hereby determine or as yet formally know any thing of possible Beings. He only knows his own Sufficiency for every thing he shall be pleased to will. Chap. XII

Moreover if this Being infinitely perfect foreknew every thing determinately, this infinitely perfect Being wou'd be ignorant, impotent, and imperfect. He wou'd be ignorant; for he wou'd not have the Idea of a free and indeterminate Being; and so wou'd want a most excellent Idea and Knowledge: for it is certain that the Idea of but one single free Being is of more Worth and Excellence than all the Ideas of the Universe. He wou'd be impotent; for in this case he cou'd not order things any other way than as they are determinately foreseen: and he wou'd himself be fatally tied up to all Eternity in all his Acts: which is what I have demonstrated to be false and absurd (a). He wou'd be imperfect; for (to reason *ad hominem*) not knowing any thing free, a Being that shou'd know a thing that was free wou'd be more perfect than him. (a) Oee. of the Creat. Chap. 13.

The Truth is, all Things and Ideas that are not the Idea of the Divinity (b), are arbitrary to God; they are to him only an indifferent, free and not necessary Sport, which he might be without or institute at choice; make things more or less free, and so foresee their Duration and Conduct more or less determinately; but it is a Contradiction determinately to foresee a thing that is indeterminate. (b) Vol. I. Ch. 2, 3, 4. Cog. Rat. Lib. 3. Cap. 10.

The arbitrary Knowledge of God must not be conceived an eternal indivisible and immutable Thing. He is free to enlarge it more or less at pleasure: and when he extends it to know a thing free and indeterminate, it is then of much larger Extent, than if by it he knew a Million of things determinate. It must not then be said that God is ignorant of future Determinations; but that then he is pleased to know a more perfect Principle than any thing that is of a determinate Nature: that his Knowledge has then a more perfect and larger Object than all determinate Objects are; and that if he knew nothing but what was determinate

Chap. XII he wou'd then be ignorant of the beautiful Idea and excellent Principle of Liberty.

We shou'd know once for all, that the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect subsists by it self alone, without any other Idea; and that whatever afterwards becomes of Things and Ideas that are not this infinitely perfect Being, this neither takes away nor adds any thing to the Idea of the infinitely perfect Being, who being content and perfect by himself alone, deals with other things as he pleases: it is almost necessary upon this Occasion to remember the Second, Third and Fourth Chapters of the *Oeconomy of the Creation*; to form a just Representation of the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being, and his true Properties.

II. *The second Difficulty about the Efficacy of God's Wills. The Answer.*

II. It is said, that a Being infinitely perfect cannot have ineffectual Wills, for one might then conceive something more perfect, viz. a Being whose Wills were effectual. I answer, That the Wills of the infinitely perfect Being touching free Agents are not ineffectual; because God wills they shou'd act freely; and then whatever they do thus, his Will is fulfilled. Therefore God's Wills have been effectual though not fatally determining, if they were so, they wou'd not be effectual; since God willing, free Creatures wou'd not have this Will of his accomplished.

III. *The third Difficulty, whether a perfect Being may have resistable Desires and Wishes. The Answer*

III. 'Tis said, in the third Place, that an infinitely perfect Being cannot will a thing (as the Salvation of all Men) and yet not do it; that he cannot have imperfected Wills, or say *I fain wou'd*: otherwise, one might conceive a Being more perfect than him, a Being that shou'd say in every case, *I will*, and *nothing can resist my Will*. I answer, first, that this cannot be said in relation to Holiness and Sin. Dare any one think that God does not will that all Men shou'd love him, and that they do not sin against him and resist his Divine Will.

In the second Place I say, that supposing God once to have will'd there shou'd be such things as free Creatures, it is Contradiction, to say, the infinitely perfect Being cannot have *I fain wou'ds* but only absolute *I wills*. The quite contrary is true. He is not now to have any absolute *I wills*, in things wherein their Liberty is concerned, for so he wou'd destroy his own Establish;

Establishment, his Work, and his own first and absolute Will, and thereby wou'd be imperfect. He must have *I fain woulds*; because all Creatures being of little or no Importance to him, and he generously desiring only their Advantage, having also made them free, it follows hence that he must needs will, but not absolutely, their Advantage. It is a palpable Contradiction to say, that a perfect Being cannot will a thing without doing it himself. For if he wills that a thing be done by some other thing, to which he gives the Power of doing it as this other thinks fit, it is plain he cou'd not himself do it without a Contradiction. These Wills are not imperfect Wills, nor do these Desires imply any Defect of Power in God. God's Desires that Man wou'd do freely what he has given him Power to do are perfect and serious Desires. The absolute Completion and Perfection which these Men contend for in these Desires of God, wou'd be the Destruction of his Design and of his free Works; and wou'd be contradictory to what God requires of his Creature, that it act and co-operate on its own part.

A Self-sufficient Being, to which all outward Communication of himself is a thing merely arbitrary, and who is pleased to communicate himself to some Subjects as largely as they shall think good to receive him, and who gives them Power to receive him at their own choice, can and ought only to expect and desire his Creature wou'd actually chuse him, and be always ready to correspond with it in Proportion to its free Determination of it self towards him. Is this arbitrary Design and this Conduct of God impossible, or absurd and unbecoming God, or unintelligible? or rather is it not Light and Easiness it self?

IV. It is said in the fourth Place, that it is contrary to the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being that any thing shou'd come to pass in the World and not be within the Ordering of his Providence. To which I say it is Contradiction to think the Order of God's Providence shou'd stand in need of Sin or Disorder. Sin cannot but be against the Order of his Providence; but it once happening, Providence checks its Eruption after such a Manner as is sufficiently explain'd in this

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IV. The
fourth Dis-
culty with
the Answer

Treatise

Chap. XII Treatise for any that will think on't without Prejudice.

V. The
fifth Diffi-
culty and
Answer.

V. The fifth Difficulty is this, that it is incompatible with the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being, to depend upon Creatures: for did it so I cou'd conceive a Being more perfect; viz. one that shou'd no way at all depend on Creatures.

I answer, this is true but does not at all affect our System, which makes neither the Nature nor the essential Attributes of God at all depending on Creatures, nor indeed so much as his arbitrary Ones; though God has himself been pleased to vary his arbitrary Ideas and their Combination upon occasion of that Liberty he was pleased to give some Creatures. It wholly depended upon God to establish Things thus or not; but having been pleased so to do, the Variation of his Ideas in consequence of the Creatures Liberty, is a Consequence depending originally on the Divine Institution. The Light of the Sun depends neither on me nor my Eyes, though it depends on me to vary a thousand Ways the Admission and the Operation of it upon me, or wholly to exclude it. It wou'd not be amiss to consider more particularly this Comparison, which you may see done in another Place more largely (a).

(a) Oec.
of the
Creat. Ch.
18. § 7.

VI. The
sixth Diffi-
culty with
the Answer

VI. The Idea of a perfect Being, as 'tis objected in the sixth Place, will not endure, that he be obliged to follow his Creatures, and to work after their Caprice.

I answer, that indeed absolutely speaking God is not obliged to any thing. But if he please to make free Creatures, and if it be his Will to oblige himself to work with them and in them by way of Correspondence with the Conduct of their Liberty; not only any one cannot hinder him from it, or think it strange he shou'd do so; but also the Idea of a perfect Being containing in it Truth and Faithfulness, does then necessarily require that he act according to the free and voluntary Behaviour of his Creature. And this is the Foundation of God's Covenants and Promises.

VII. The
Answer to
the seventh
Difficulty.

(b) Oec.
of the

VII. 'Tis pretended as the seventh Difficulty, that were Creatures independent on God it wou'd ruine the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being. I have at large satisfied this Difficulty in the first Treatise (b). The Idea

Creation, Chap. 8. § 7, 8, 9.

Idea of an infinitely perfect Being is much more amplified or illustrated by holding that there depends on the Divine Institution a certain Nature of Beings to which God has given, to represent his own Independence, the free Conduct of their Acts, than if we shou'd say that he cou'd not do this. Which I have also proved in another Place (a).

VIII. I have likewise so fully satisfied the following Difficulty in another Place (b) and all the Members of it, that I may well forbear saying any more to it here: yet will I say this one Word more, that it is so far from belonging to the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect, that it be impossible to resist his Will; that on the contrary, Sin is therefore only infinitely evil and imperfect because it is an actual and formal Resistance to the Will of an infinitely perfect Being; and that Damnation is therefore only miserable because it is an Hindrance, not of his Design in general, but, of the particular Admission and Execution of this Design in some particular Persons. Why shou'd it be contrary to the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being to say, that free Creatures were the Cause that he did not do and ratifie as to them what he was not pleased to do but upon Condition of their Correspondence and of their freely willing it? I think one cannot without enormous Falsity alledge any other Reasons of the Creature's Damnation.

Thus, I think, the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being remains entirely untouch'd by such a Method as explains Providence and Grace after such a Manner as saves the Holiness and Justice of God, that preserves them perfectly in their full Brightness, and leaves Man entirely free, and makes him the sole Author of his Miseries; so that none of them can be charged upon God. Let who will now side with me. In the mean while I will continue my Answers to the rest of the Difficulties that still remain upon this Subject.

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(a) Ibid.

Chap. 16.

§ 11, 12,

13. & Ch.

17. § 2.

VIII. An

Answer to

the eighth

Difficulty.

(b) Oec.

of Sin,

Chap. 7.

§ 2, 3, 4, 5.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

Four Capital and Artificial Difficulties against the System of Universal Grace in favour of Supralapsism and Particularism. The Solution of 'em.

I. *Four main Difficulties oppos'd against the Universality of Grace.*

I.



AMONG the many artificial Difficulties that are rais'd against the Universality of God's Grace in defence of the opposite Doctrine, there are four principal ones, which I intend to propose and solve. The *first* is taken from the

Principle and Motive of God's Actions; the *second*, from the Consideration of the Execution and Event of them; the *third*, from the Consideration of the Nature of Divine Actions; the *fourth*, from the Consideration of Man's Duty.

(1.) *The first is this, and it is drawn from the Foundation of Supralapsism.*

(1.) God, say they, was pleas'd to make Creatures for the Manifestation of his Glory. The Manifestation of God's Glory consists in the Manifestation of his Attributes. Among other of his Attributes there is his Justice, and his Mercy. Salvation is the Manifestation of his Mercy, and Damnation is the Manifestation of his Justice: Now God owes his Creatures nothing, and may do what he pleases with them. Therefore he might (owing them nothing) and ought (since he intended to manifest the Glory of his Justice and Mercy) he might, I say, and ought to create some to manifest the Glory of his Mercy in their Salvation, and to create others to shew the Glory of his Justice by their eternal Death and Damnation. You see here the Grounds of *Supralapsism*: and if they be sound, our System will be good for nothing.

II. *This Doctrine gives a frightful Idea of God and his Glory.*

II. I cannot without a very sensible Grief see Men suffer themselves to be so extremely blinded by the Devil, as to propose so frightful a Doctrine as this is, as a grand Means to shew forth God's Glory. God's Glory consists in having his Vertues known and recogniz'd to be in a most bright and peaceful Harmony and Agreement

Agreement with one another. The Vertues, or Attributes of God are Beauty, Goodness, Joy, Delight; and all that is in God is of this Nature; and therefore all he manifests of himself externally must be such too. In him there is no Darkness, nor Torment, nor Fire devouring with eternal Rage and Fury.

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XIII.

How then shou'd he manifest such things outwardly? He cannot with Pomp and Glory manifest any thing but his Meekness, Love and bright Joy. It is Contradiction to fancy he cou'd will and do otherwise, disfigure and draw himself a Devil, as I have demonstrated elsewhere (a). A fine Image this! A fair Representation of God! A beautiful Manifestation of his Attributes indeed! A Creature destin'd to hate and blaspheme God, and to rave in Torment of Soul and Body to all Eternity! I wou'd be glad to know whether these Men wou'd be well pleas'd with such a God had he these Designs upon themselves, and what they wou'd then say and think of their God. To represent a God making Creatures on purpose to torment them, thereby to glorifie and declare some of his pretended Attributes, and for this End to decree they shall infallibly fall, is assuredly the Idea of the Great Devil of Hell, who is not altogether so wicked and detestable a Being.

(a) Oec.
of the
Creat.Ch.
5. § 7, 8, 9.

III. I have before (b) shewn that it was not at all necessary for Sin to intervene to manifest what is substantial of God's Justice and Mercy. As to his Mercy there is nothing that more shocks Common Sense than that odd Idea of it that makes it consist, in willing or permitting Evils and Miseries to happen which one might have hinder'd, to shew afterwards upon that occasion Marks and Effects of Compassion. A pleasant and ridiculous Notion this! A truly merciful Person had much rather hinder, or at least do all he can to hinder Evils, than let them happen out of pure Humour, to shew afterwards that he is touch'd with Compassion at them. To act otherwise wou'd be rather Malignity and Hypocrisy than Mercy: and this is what they that stand so much upon St. Augustin's Doctrine ought to acknowledge. *Etsi approbetur; (c) officio charitatis qui dolet miserum, mallet tamen utiq; non esse quod*

III. The Intervention of Sin is not necessary to manifest either the Mercy or Justice of God; and that neither of 'em are manifested by the Supralapsarian System.

(b) Supr.
Ch. 2. § 2.

(c) Aug. Conf. Lib. 3. cap. 2.

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XIII.

*doleret, qui germanitus misericors est. Si enim est male-
vola benevolentia (quod fieri non potest) potest & ille qui
veraciter sinceriterq; miseretur, cupere esse miseros ut mi-
seretur: that is,* "Though he that is touch'd with
"Compassion towards the miserable, be to be com-
"mended for this his Act of Love, yet if he be truly
"merciful he had rather there were none in a Condition
"that needed his Pity. And it is as impossible he shou'd
"desire there shou'd be some in Misery that he might
"have occasion of shewing his Pity, as it is for Kind-
"ness to be Malicious, or that our Good-will to our
"Neighbour shou'd incline us to wish Ill to him. This
"Reflexion well pursued is enough to ruine the whole
"System of Modern Predestination.

It is more especially very plain with respect to God's Justice, that neither Sin nor the Misery of Damnation is necessary to its Manifestation. For Justice in God is no Property of a Tyrant and cruel Executioner, that requires for its Portraiture and Picture, for its Representation and Manifestation, the endless and dreadful Torments of a poor Creature destin'd to them before it was born by inevitable Means and Decrees. But it is an effectual Will by which God has so order'd Things, that it shall befall every one according to his Choice. This Justice may be manifested without any such thing as Sin or Damnation; and God designed to manifest it only in the way of Good, by rendering to every one different Measures of Good, greater or less, in exact Proportion to their Choice more or less full, ardent and lasting as they shou'd make of God, of his Goods, his Vertues, and of his different Works.

It is by Accident and through Man's Fault alone; and against God's Will, that this Justice comes to be manifested in Evil; neither does he manifest it by willing and positively causing Torments; but barely by leaving Man to himself after having found that he is resolved to continue wilfully in the Rejection of his Divine Grace. But had not Man had the Liberty to chuse Life or Death, had not God offered him Life, but he had fall'n by mere Fatality, without having by a Choice, so free that he might not have done it, embraced Death and Sin; wou'd not the adjudging him to Damnation have been a rare Administration and Ma-

Manifestation of Justice? *Justice* supposes a free and antecedent Act of the Person on whom it is executed; otherwise it is mere Good-pleasure, and where Pain is inflicted nothing but a malicious Caprice.

IV. But, say they, God may do what he will with his Creatures, since he owes them nothing. Very well, this then is no Manifestation of his Justice; but of his Freedom and Indifference. And what follows from this Liberty God may take with his Creatures; He indeed owes them no Good; much less does he owe them any Hurt; For he is no Devil. He may therefore do what he will with them, but it must be in some Good or other; either give them none at all by leaving 'em in their Nothingness; or a little, by making them of Earth; or a great deal, by making them after his own Image, and thereby qualifying them to bear such of his bright, happy, and glorious Attributes as he shall think meet, and to what Degree he pleases. But to think God can do with his Creatures even in Evil what he pleases, or rather what Man's capricious Humour is pleased to ascribe to him, is so horrid a thing that I tremble when I think on't, and when I look upon all the Parts of the rare System grounded upon that Supposition: and the fine Methods they cut out for God: for in fine, it is as if they shou'd make him say thus: "I, that am in my self bright and happy, and
"that have no need to produce any Creatures at all
"for my essential Glory, yet will I do it arbitrarily
"to manifest what is in me. And upon this Principle
"they will be bright and happy, which is what I can
"make them all; but for all this, though I have in
"me neither Darkness nor Torment nor Rage, and
"though I be infinitely remov'd from any such Thing,
"yet will I make Creatures that shall have in them all
"these Qualities, and that to represent and manifest
"such Things as are not in me, and which I abhor;
"and I will have this called, *my vindictive Justice*. I
"will make these Creatures capable of an infinite
"Good which I intend never to give them, and this
"will prove their Torment: and by this it shall be
"seen that I am just; for they shall be deprived of
"this Infinite Happiness by means of a Decree of
"mine, which I will make merely because I will.

Never-

IV. How
God may,
or may not
do what
he pleases
with his
Creatures.

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XIII.

“ Nevertheless I will create them at first with this
 “ Light and Good within them; but then I will leave
 “ them without effectual Help, and will order all the
 “ Circumstances of their Fall; I will my self cause all
 “ the Angel's, the Devil's and the Serpent's Acts, and
 “ Motions, and even the Acts of their Thoughts;
 “ for all depends upon my particular Decree, Con-
 “ course and Influence. And all this while I will make
 “ them believe it was all owing to themselves that
 “ things were not otherwise; though in truth they
 “ cou'd not have gone otherwise in case I were not
 “ willing to decree, move, and determine them other-
 “ wise. Of these Men fall'n into a State of Damna-
 “ tion, though I cou'd with the same ease lift them all
 “ up again, and be not a whit the less happy and
 “ glorious my self, and though they be all equally ca-
 “ pable of this Favour of mine; yet will I restore but
 “ a very few of them, and in them I will so work that
 “ they shall not be able to resist me: and how is it pos-
 “ sible they shou'd, they not being able to act of them-
 “ selves neither against my Determination nor against
 “ my Decrees? As for the others, that make the greater
 “ Number, I leave them to the Devil. My Grace and
 “ eternal Salvation is not for them; nor indeed can
 “ they determine themselves to receive them though
 “ I presented them to them. Yet, do I exhort them
 “ to do it, I make a great Noise and Stir, command,
 “ threaten, and pray, I thunder and lighten finely,
 “ enjoining upon a Penalty to which they are al-
 “ ready predestinated, that in case they design not to
 “ aggravate their Damnation, they wou'd not resist a
 “ Grace not intended for them and which I will not
 “ offer them, or but by Halves, or with an Intent to
 “ take it from them again, or by refusing them what
 “ is necessary for their preserving of it, and which they
 “ cannot of themselves have. And because they have
 “ not done what it was impossible they shou'd, and
 “ what they cou'd not have done without arguing me
 “ to be impotent, inconstant and ignorant in my De-
 “ crees and Foresight, and because they have not done
 “ what I never design'd they shou'd, and what I never
 “ cordially and really meant they shou'd, I will cast
 “ them into Hell, to which place I had also predesti-
 “ nated

“nated them before any Foresight of their Behaviour :
 “and by this Means I will let all see how just and
 “equal I am in my Dealings, acting according to
 “exact Equity and Justice with every one, disposing of
 “them as I think fit without any regard to their Dis-
 “positions : for I can do what I will with my Crea-
 “tures, and I owe them nothing. So that now Men
 “plainly see me manifested as just, and therefore
 “ought to glorifie me, and acknowledge me to be a
 “wonderful and infinitely lovely Being. See what
 “fine and rare Inventions these are !

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XIII.

V. (2.) But I'll leave them to come to the Difficulty V(2) *Whether we are to measure God's Intention and Designs by the Event of things.*
 that is rais'd from the Consideration of the Event of things and the Execution of them. Since after all, say they, it will in the Event be found that few shall be sav'd, and the greater part damn'd, why shou'd we not measure God's Will and Designs by this Issue of things? And is it not likewise true in sound Philosophy, that what is last in Execution, was first in Intention? *Quod ultimum est in executione, illud primum est in intentione,* say the Learned. Now in the Execution of things, what God does last, is, his saving some and damning others ; therefore was this his first Intention.

I answer, that these rare Principles do no more nor less than authorise all the Sins, all the horrid and devilish Villanies in the World and in Hell : for the Event has already discover'd in part these Abominations, and will hereafter eternally discover them in Hell : this will be the Issue ; and this will be executed : and must we therefore from hence take an estimate of God's Will and Designs, and say, that all the Ill that has or ever will happen is what God first design'd ? On the quite contrary, we shou'd separate the Event of evil Things from God's Design, because they are Evil ; and because the last Execution of God as to, what concerns the Wicked, will be his strange and unaccustom'd Work, (as has been above (a) explain'd) therefore we shou'd conclude it was not what he first intended. When to any Design there happens something foreign and accessory, and indeed contrary to the principal Work, as Sin is in regard of God's Design and Works, then all that is done toward this foreign Business, was not what was at first intended. This Rule of Philosophy is then

This would authorise all the Abominations of the World and of Hell, and that the contrary is true concerning Evil.

(a) Supr.
Chap. 10.
§ 4, &c.

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only true when nothing opposite or foreign to the Design does by Accident supervene. To this I add, that as God does not positively punish the Wicked, and as he will at last leave both them and their eternal Blasphemies and think no more on them, so shou'd we thence infer, that his first Intention was neither to think of Sins nor Sinners, and so not to predestinate any either to Sin or Damnation.

VI God's
Designs
touching
the Salva-
tion of all,
are not in
vain, tho'
all be not
sav'd.

VI. (3.) But say they, for the *third* main Difficulty, (and this they dwell mightily upon) God cannot design or act in vain and so as to be frustrated: for all he does ought to have on it the Marks of his Reality, Power and Wisdom.

How therefore cou'd he have either the Will or Design to save all, seeing this Design is not brought about, but vanishes into Smoak as to the greatest part of Men?

My Answer is, God did not design to save all Men absolutely, mechanically, by force and physical Operation; but freely, and as they themselves shou'd be willing. Now this is and always shall be fulfill'd. If any one will freely forsake God, God's Design even with regard to such an one does not vanish into Air; because it never was nor ever will be any Design of God's to save Men without the Mediation of their Liberty. He has been, is, and ever will be pleas'd that his Salvation find Entrance and Reception from Man's Liberty, and he has given him his Choice and Power to do it as he will himself, as has been prov'd already (a).

(a) Oec.
of the
Creation,
Chap. 17.

Hence we see that let the Event be what it will, this Design will stand unshaken, which it wou'd not by the Doctrine that asserts God absolutely and infallibly determines our Liberty.

VII. What
God and
Jesus Christ
have done
for the Sal-
vation of
all Men is
not in vain
tho' all
were not
saved.

VII. But what will become, as they still urge us, then of so many Actions of God and of Jesus Christ his Intercession, his Death, the Offers of his Light and Grace, which we pretend are tender'd even to the Wicked, who for all that are damn'd? Wou'd not all this be at least useless and in vain? And can God act in vain?

Answer. God does nothing in vain in this Sense, as if he lost somewhat he stood in need of, and of which he was depriv'd after he had lost it.

Secondly,

Secondly, Those very things which in respect of the Wicked and Rebellious are rendred useleſs, viz. the Lights and Grace of God, the Fruits and Effects of the Interceſſion and Death of *Jeſus Chriſt*, theſe things which the Wicked reject does God take again and give a double Portion of them to the Righteous. The Talent given to the ſlothful Servant was not a thing in vain. God was far from letting it be loſt, but took it away again and gave it to the faithful Servant, whoſe Portion was thereby made greater.

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In the *third Place*, theſe Offers, Graces and Actions of God are not vain, in as much as they ſerve to manifeſt God's grand Charity, and his immense and infinite Love towards his Enemies.

This, in the *fourth Place*, is what all his Creatures, at leaſt ſo many of them as are good and reaſonable are infinitely affected with, and are by it wrapt with inexpressible Admiration, Love and Gratitude towards ſo prodigious a Mercy of God.

In the *fiſth Place*, *Jeſus Chriſt* has the Satisfaction of Conſcience and the inward and comfortable Senſe, as I may ſay, and Teſtimony of having been patient, merciful, and a Lover of his Creatures, of not having been wanting to them in any thing, and of having done on his Part all that the Bowels of his infinite Mercies cou'd inſpire his Majeſty with.

In the *ſixth Place*, thoſe things which we take to be in vain, ſerve to juſtify and openly manifeſt all God's Ways, his Proteſtations and Declarations, which wou'd otherwiſe be unjuſt, falſe and deluſive.

And *laſtly*, they ſerve to ſtop all the Murmures and Blaſphemies of the Wicked and Damn'd, who are convinc'd of Injuſtice and Ingratitude, while the Juſtice, Mercy and Love of God ſhine as a Sun, which no Clouds can darken. And will any one now ſay that all theſe things are ſtill in vain?

VIII. (4.) The moſt ſpecious Colour that the Subtlety of blind Reaſon has invented to put upon the barbarous Decree of Reprobation, eſpecially in the Senſe of the Supralapſarians, is, the ſaying (a) that it is but an Effect of Self-love not to be willing to conſent to one's own own Reprobation and Damnation. The Falſity of this Thought: (a) See Yvon. de Predeſt. p. 143, 144, &c.

VIII.

Whether
Men ought
to conſent
to their

own own Repro-

Chap.
XIII.



own Damnation : that only Self-love makes this seem hard ; that we shou'd here rather submit to the Will of God, and say to him, *Thy Will be done*, than seek one's own Advantage ; in a Word, that we shou'd deny our own Will and prefer God's before it.

Do we not here behold Satan finely disguis'd like an Angel of Light, and his Cause dress'd up in God's Livery ? But how gross are these Fetches ! How shall Damnation and Reprobation be the Means of pure Love and Self-abnegation ? Will God reprobate and damn his Creatures to oblige them to love him purely and to deny themselves ? Shall Reprobation have Love for its End, or can it or ought it to be done with Love, with Humility and Self-denial ! I know not what Men must think to come to such a pass.

We think, say they, on what Saints often say, that we must love God's Will above our own Salvation, and that they expressly tell us that if God wills our Damnation, we ought to consent to it and say, *Amen*. I answer, that there are two Things to be considered in Damnation, the one is the Separation from the Love and Holiness of God, or Sin ; and this is the chief part of Damnation ; the other, is the Torments and Pain of Sense. This latter, is but an accessory, which were it not for Sin, wou'd be accompanied with an unspeakable Acquiescence, and wou'd soon vanish, though we expected no such thing nor knew how, nor thought any thing of it. It was with respect to this Pain of Sense, that such Saints, as were in there Purifi-

(a) See the Oecon. of said, that we shou'd consent to this Damnation, without troubling our selves whether it shall last for ever Chap. 5, 6, or not ; and that in this Case we shou'd prefer the Will and Justice of God before our own Interest. But to fancy they so understood it, as that we ought to consent to be separated, were it but for a Moment, from God's Will, to be deprived of his Love and be an Enemy to his Holiness ; that God willed this, and that he has predestinated the greatest Part of Men to this, is horrid and abominable. None but the Devil and his Friends can will this, and require Mens Consent to it ; and to approve of such consenting to ones Damnation, is to defend his Cause. No Saint ever thought

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thought of acquiescing in this, nor could they do so without becoming thereby impious and wicked. When God does but seem to withdraw his Love from them, by with-holding from them the Sense of his Union with them, they are so far from consenting to it, that they are extremely importunate and earnest in Prayer with him not to do so. 'Twas this made a most holy Soul who thought God was forsaking her say on her Death bed (a); *It is now my Lord five and thirty Years since I begged any thing of thee for my self: now I pray thee not to separate me from thee; thou knowest, O Lord, how intollerable a thing that would be to me. O my Lord, I could easily bear any thing but this Separation; it being contrary to the Soul, with which it cannot subsist.* The Truth of this has been demonstrated in the first Treatise, that the Nature of the Soul was made and constituted of God to be united with him, and not to be separated from him, as the Devil, Sin, Lyes, and Errour would make us believe, and then Christen this abominable Thought by the Name of God's Cause; whose Advocates Men pretend to be when they are indeed pleading for the Devil and Sin.

(a) St.
Cath. of
Genoa,
cap. 49.

IX. 'Tis from the same Blindness that some being hard pressed, that their Doctrine leads Men to Despair, and not knowing how to rid themselves of that Objection, have said, that there is no such great Inconvenience in Despair, and that there is some Despair that is saving. These People are excellent at blowing Hot and Cold. Sometimes they are fierce for crying up the Necessity of Assurance of ones Salvation, and that by an indefectible Faith and Election: and now they change their Note and tell us to despair is a good Thing. But pray what Kind of Despair is it that is so? It is certainly a good Thing to despair of our own Strength, Vertue and Merit, and of any Power of our own to continue in a faithful Correspondence to God's Graces. But to think we ought to despair of God's Love and Mercy, to despair he ever had the Will to save us and to give us his Grace; this I maintain to be damnable and devilish Despair; and yet this is whither the Doctrine of Predestination to Damnation, or that of absolute Preterition directly leads.

IX. Tho' there be one sort of Despair that is good, yet that is not it which proceeds from the Consideration of Re-probation.

X. A very
singular
way of an-
swering the
Difficulties
charg'd
upon the
Doctrine of
Reprobation.

X. But was there ever a more admirable Method taken, than some have after a very pleasant Manner pitch'd upon to cover their Supralapsism from such Consequences blasphemous and injurious to God as are shewn to follow from it? They lay it down for a Truth, that their Doctrine is of God, that it is his Thought and Cause; and then they think they have all the right in the world to be transported with Anger (they think divine) and Zeal against all such as raise these Objections, as Persons that murmur against God himself, that blaspheme, calumniate, and accuse him of Injustice and Cruelty; and upon this use them as Wicked and Blasphemers. Some it may be will think I do but tell Stories, and suppose Cases that never were; did I not let them know where they might see this rare Course has been taken, by directing them to two or three Libels published by Labady's Disciples at all Adventures against Mrs. Bourignon, without their being once so much as able to understand her. I think I need not reckon this wonderful Method among the Difficulties that need answering. It is too singular a one to be meddled with, and deserves the Favour commonly shewn to the most rare and most irregular Monsters, to be charily kept for the Rarity Sake, instead of thinking to destroy it.

CHAP. XIV.

Difficulties objected from the Scripture. Five general Sources of their Solution. An Answer to some particular Passages.

I. The
ways of
answering
Objections
drawn
from Scri-
pture.

I.



INTEND not particularly to answer all the Passages that may be alledged from Scripture in defence of a Doctrine contrary to the Truths I have advanc'd, I shou'd think there were now no more Difficulty in them, at least in most of them, after we have once read and understood the Truths contain'd in the preceding Treatises; I have already

already explain'd the greatest part of them in divers Places, as for Example, this, *No Man cometh to me except the Father who has sent me draw him* (a); and this other, *God works in you both to will and to do according to his good Pleasure* (b); and again, *Whom he will God hardens, and shews Mercy to whom he will shew Mercy* (c), and many others as you may have observ'd. I shall content my self here to point out the general Source of the false Interpretations that are put upon these sorts of Passages; and then shall examine two or three of them particularly, and will end with the Consideration of what is most remarkable concerning this Matter in *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*.

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(a) Oec. of the Co-oper. cap. 4. § 12. and above, cap. 2. § 13.

(b) Oec. of the Co-oper. cap. 4. n. § 3.

14. (c) Oecon. of Sin, cap. 2.

II. (1.) *First*, Instead of distinguishing the divers sorts of Predestinations, Elections and Reprobations, Men commonly confound them all to set up only such as concern a happy or miserable Eternity. I have elsewhere (d) particularly taken notice of this Inconvenience.

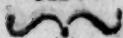
II. The Sources of these false Interpretations of Scripture-Passages n. 10.

are these. (d) Oecon. of the Creat. Chap. 19.

(2.) *Secondly*, when the Scripture speaks of Election and Reprobation, Men do untowardly suppose 'tis such an Election and Reprobation as directly respects Persons or Individuals, and their State and Disposition only indirectly, which they will have to be but a Consequent of this Election and Reprobation; whereas indeed Election respects directly the States and Dispositions, and indirectly the Persons who fall under this Election or not, according to the State they are already in or acquire, and keep themselves in by their Liberty. It is God's Will directly to chuse that Liberty that gives up it self to him and to the Operations of his Grace, in whatever Persons this Liberty may happen to be thus resigned; and it is his Will to chuse immediately and in consequence of the Liberty thus abandoned to him, *Peter, James or John*, that have not wilfully resisted him. And it is just so in Reprobation. And thus when it is said God chose to himself a People, as the *Israelites*, and that he cast off another People, as the *Edomites*; besides that this

(2.) Men suppose the immediate Object of Election and Reprobation to be Persons as such and such Individuals; whereas it is the Dispositions of the Heart that are their Object.

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Does not mean Election to eternal Life, yet if Men will suppose it does, this must not signifie that all the Individuals of the People of *Israel* were elected to Life, and that all the Individuals of the *Edomites* were Personally reprobated or predestinated to Death: but this wou'd signifie that God who is a Lover of Humility and Simplicity, and a Hater of Pride and Haughtiness, did also chuse *Jacob* the humble and the plain, and all such of his Race as shall partake of the same Temper; and reject the haughty and proud *Esau*, and those of his Posterity in whom this Disposition shou'd be predominant. Yet all such particular Persons among the *Israelites* as shall be fierce and proud shall before God be esteemed as Reprobate *Edomites*, because of this Humour and Temper of theirs: and on the contrary, all those particular *Edomites* that shall be of an humble Heart, shall be reckoned by God among the elect *Israelites*. For 'tis the Disposition of Heart that does all with God; 'tis by that we possess God or the Devil, that we become Angels or Devils, *Israelite* or *Edomite*, Elect or Reprobate: that is the immediate and direct Object of Election and Reprobation, and here lies the true Sense of what the Scripture says, that *God is no acceptor of Persons* (a): that is to say, that the direct Object of God's Acceptance, Choice, and Election are not Persons as Persons, but as so and so disposed, and in such and such States pleasing or displeasing to God.

(a) Acts
10. 34.

(3.) Men
confound
the wise,
bright, just
and equal
Good-plea-
sure of God
with a
Good-plea-
sure of a
capricious
and hu-
moursome
Man.

(3.) A third Fault Men are guilty of in interpreting Places of Scripture that relate to this Point is this, that whenever there is any thing spoken of the Good-pleasure or Will of God, they presently frame their Notions of God's Good-pleasure and Will from the Caprices of Men, and take it to be just like them, and indeed something worse. Men being ignorant, foolish, fickle and malicious and violent, it ordinarily falls out that in their different Carriage towards different Subjects, they have no other Reason of their different Usage of them, but a pure *I will*, *such is my Will and Good-pleasure*, which is as much as to say, that the true Principle of their Determination is really nothing but Ignorance, Folly, Inconstancy, and often the mere Spitefulness and Haughtiness of their Spirit. But were they wise, enlighten'd, equal and just, their Good-pleasure and

and their *I will* wou'd be quite a different thing. Now God is infinitely wise, luminous, constant, and Justice it self. Therefore is his Good-pleasure and Will a Good-pleasure and Will of *Light*, that makes him see the different Dispositions of Subjects; of *Wisdom*, that makes him award different Treatments and different States to different Subjects; of *Justice*, that makes him so proportion to Men the Issues of Things, as every one may have according to his Choice; and lastly his Good-pleasure is a Will of *Constancy* and Equality, always treating Subjects equally disposed alike; being far from damning one and saving another, reprobating one and chusing another, of two Persons that are of the same Dispositions.

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He has compassion (a) on whom it pleases him to have. (a) Rom. compassion, and whom he pleases he hardeneth, or rejecteth; 9. 18.

he shews Mercy and refuses it to whom he pleases: that is to say, to whom he thinks good and meet so to do from a resolute and fixt Principle of equal and impartial Justice, and of a clear and bright Wisdom. For the just, impartial, immutable, wise and bright Will of God, has not nor will have any Complacence but only in such Souls as turn to him with Vacuity, Self-denial, Resignation and Humility. God is pleased to make choice of no other; and when he chuses them it is because they are within the Order, and among the Number of the Objects wherein he takes delight. As on the contrary the same just, wise and impartial Will is pleased to leave, where he finds them, all such Souls as are turned towards themselves, their Grandeur, their Works, and their own Strength. These he rejects; because it is not his Pleasure to communicate himself to Subjects thus conditioned. The Scripture in an hundred Places bears witness to these Truths (b), (b) Isa. 57. that God takes pleasure in the humble, that he looks 15. & 62. upon a broken Spirit, and that his Inclination is to- 2. wards mean and low Things; and that Pride, Self. Pf. 138. 6. will, and Haughtiness displease him. Such therefore 1 Pet. 5. is the Good-pleasure and Will of God, and is far 15. enough removed from that unjust, inconstant, cruel and malicious Caprice, which Men seem to take mighty Pains to hide under the Name of the Divine Good-pleasure and Will.

(4.) The

(4.) Men
confound
the real
and produ-
ctive Cause
of Grace
with the
admissive.

(4.) The *fourth* Source of the Faults Men commit when they bring Places of Scripture to maintain the Doctrine of personal and absolute Predestination, is, their confounding God's Act, which is the productive and efficient Cause of Grace, with the Act of the Liberty of the Creature, which is but an admissive, and not a productive and efficient Cause of Good. I will explain my self. The Scripture in divers Places considers the saving Effects or Graces; with relation to their Cause that has produced the Reality of them; and then it says, that God is the Cause of them and not Man. And what have they concluded from hence? Why, that Men were not free to admit or not to admit God's Grace. Wherefore? Because Grace depends upon God only and not on Man. Yes, that is very true: Grace depends upon God only as the productive and efficient Cause of it; but the Admission or Rejection of it are quite different things from the productive Cause of it; and so the Admission and Rejection of it may depend, and indeed do, upon Man, God having been pleased so to ordain, and 'tis upon this Supposition only that the Scripture speaks, and which it expressly confirms in an hundred Places.

Example
and Appli-
cation.

When for Instance, this Place is alledged (a); *It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*; or this (b), *Who maketh thee to differ from another*? Men do not sufficiently take notice of what I but now observed. They fancy that by the first of these Passages the Scripture teaches us that it does not depend upon the the Will or Endeavours of Man to admit, or not to admit the Grace of God; but here is no such thing intended. The Scripture designs only to let us see, that it is neither our Will nor Endeavours that produce divine Grace in us; just as if a Man wou'd be enlightened, and to that Intent ran into the Sun; if upon that he did enjoy the Light, it is still true that this Light depends *neither upon him that willeth nor on him that runneth* but upon the Sun that gives the Light; and shou'd any Man fancy he must needs be enlighten'd by virtue and strength of his *willing* or his *running*, 'tis certain he wou'd deserve to have the Sun deny him his Light: as the Sun of Righteousness does to such as make his Divine Illumination depend

depend on their *willing* or *running*, which depends solely on him that *sheweth Mercy* and *Grace*.

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And thus also must the second Passage be understood; it is God alone that is the productive Cause of those Gifts and Graces that make one Man differ from another: *What hast thou that thou hast not receiv'd from God* the Author and Giver of it? But this is not to say that Man has not the Liberty to make himself differ from another in quality of an admittive or non-admittive Cause. On the contrary, this is what is properly and solely Man's Duty and within his Power. I omit to mention a great many more Examples of this kind as easily I might.

(5.) *Lastly*, a fifth Spring of wrong Interpretations of Scripture Passages brought to prove the Point in question, is, Men's confounding the outward Means of God's Calling, or the outward Call, with the inward Call, which God gives to every Soul by the Operations of his Grace. Hence, for Example, when the Scripture says, *That God has not shewn his Statutes unto other Nations, as he did to Israel; and that therefore the Heathen had not the knowledge of his Laws* (a): 'tis inferr'd, that God not being pleas'd to give the Means of Salvation to the Heathen, nor to call them, it was his Will and Pleasure likewise not to save them. But this Conclusion is not right. All that shou'd be thence inferr'd, is, that God for just Reasons, wou'd not administer to them the outward Means as he did to the Jews; so that they knew not those Statutes of God that were peculiar to the Jews; but it by no Means follows that they knew nothing of God by the inward Light, and that he was not willing to save them, nor ever tried to do it by the Operations of this Divine Light in their Interiour. The Truth of this has been shewn at large in another Place (b).

(5.) Men
confound
the Admin-
istration
of outward
Means
with in-
ward.

(a) Psal.
147. 19,
20.

(b) Oec.
of the
Restor.
before
the Inc.
Cap. 6, 7,
8, 9, & 13.

These Five general Observations upon the Springs of the wrong Senses put upon Passages of Holy Scripture, do at the same time point us out so many general Ways of solving the Difficulties that arise from such places. Yet there are some still behind, the Explication or Solution of which must, it shou'd seem, be taken from some other Considerations. This is one of them.

III. To

III. An
Explicati-
on of a Pas-
sage out of
Proverbs.

(a) Prov.
21. 1.

(b) Gal. 2.

(c) Oec.
of Co-op.
chap. 2.
§ 15.

(d) See a-
bove Chap.
10. § 3.

III. To shew that Man has not the Liberty to dis-
pose of the Motions of his Heart, or at least, that God
disposes it after an irresistible and physically certain
Manner, they bring this Passage of Solomon. (a) *The
King's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of wa-
ter, and he turneth it whithersoever he pleases.* But there
is no necessity for the Explication of this Place to have
recourse to God's preventing and irresistible bending of
the Heart to turn it from Evil to Good; which would
plainly destroy Liberty. Suppose we then that Solomon
speaks here of a pious King, or of a King in a mystical
Sense, that is, of a faithful Soul that has got the Domi-
nion over her own Passions, and has entirely resign'd her
Self up to God. It is then clear, that God bends her
Heart which way he pleases; because such a Soul has
given up her Liberty to God, and consents God should
do with her what he will, as St. Paul said, *'Tis no more
I that live, but Jesus Christ that lives in me* (b). But this
is what is no way against my Sentiments upon Liberty,
as may be seen elsewhere (c); for I hold that God does
determine and govern our Liberty when it is willing
he should, and resigns it self up to him.
But if we suppose this King that Solomon speaks of to
be a wicked one, the Sense of the place will be this,
either that God gives wicked Kings such good Motions
and Inspirations as he shall think fit, yet without taking
from them their Liberty to follow or reject them; or
rather, these corrupt Hearts being not willing to give
way to these Inspirations so as to be converted by 'em,
and being likewise envenom'd Fountains of Waters that
would overflow on all sides and make general Devasta-
tions; God throws up Banks against them on some
sides, and lets them rowl on on others as he will: which
makes nothing for a physical Determination of our Li-
berty (d). Add to this, that in Matters of outward
Management God may an hundred ways bend or turn
the Heart towards some certain outward Objects or
towards others: for he may dispose of both the Ob-
jects and Circumstances, and of the Motion of the
Blood and Spirits, the Impressions of which how
changeable and inconstant soever they be, the Soul does
habitually and of custom follow. But in the Matter
of Conversion, as the Motions to it must be pure, spi-
ritual,

ritual, and divine, and there being as yet in the Soul no habit or custom of following such Motions, but the Instincts of Flesh and Blood, and many evil Habits against her so doing; it is evident, that let God give her what Motions he will, yet the Soul has still so much Freedom left her to resist, that most commonly and ordinarily she effectually does so, nor is she carried whither God would have had her. Nor is it in this Sense that Solomon says *God turns the King's heart*; for if it were, none would resist God; and all would be convert and saved; *for it is not his will that any should perish.*

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IV. Another place that is produc'd to shew that God wills not the Salvation of all Men, nor that all should have Faith but only those that are by him predestinated to Life, is that of the *Acts*, where it is said that after St. Paul had preach'd the Gospel, (a) *those*, of his Hearers, *that were ordain'd to Eternal Life, believ'd.* I have nothing to say upon this after what has been already observ'd by others, that it should have been translated, *those that were dispos'd towards Eternal Life, believ'd*; that is to say, such as were seriously and heartily dispos'd to seek and to work out their Salvation, they saw and acknowledged the Truth of what the Apostle said and embrac'd it. 'Tis of this Ordination and Disposition of Heart that *Jesus Christ* says, (b) *If any Man will do the will of him that sent me, he shall know my Doctrine.* Now what does this make for them, who would hence conclude, that God's Will is to give Eternal Life but to some, and that he gives Faith only to this small Number of the predestinate?

IV. *Explanation of a Passage in the Acts.*

(a) *Acts*
13. 48.

(b) *Jo.* 7.
17.

C H A P. XV.

*The Design of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans,
taken in Nineteen Propositions. An Abridg-
ment of the Eight first Chapters.*

*The Epistle
to the Ro-
mans the
chief Pre-
text for
Predesti-
nation.*



IT must be own'd on all Hands that the main Fort. if not the only one of those that hold Predestination, in that Sense wherein we have hitherto oppos'd it, is the Ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, with part of the Eighth, Tenth, and Eleventh. So that if we can but satisfy them here without having recourse to their Hypotheses, they will be oblig'd to confess that nothing in the whole Scripture makes for them: for whatever other Passages may be alledg'd, they cannot be so strongly urg'd as some of this Epistle. I will therefore endeavour to give some Satisfaction in this Matter; and not only that, but also to give a short View of this whole Divine Epistle, which will serve to verify the whole Body of the Theological System propos'd in the preceding Treatises. I shall content my self in one Word to note things only, without any further enlarging upon them.

As common and as true as the Opinion is, that this Epistle of St. Paul, is a compleat System of Divinity, the true Interpretation of it is as rare and as uncommon. Every one makes different Comments upon it according to the divers Prejudices they are in. I cannot do better than not think at all on what has been written on it; but seek out of my self, with God's Grace, the true Sense of it, as I am used to do upon all Occasions, always considering things in my Interiour as in the Presence of God, not regarding what others or my self may have formerly thought of them.

*The design
of this Epi-
stle in nine-
teen Pro-
positions.*

To understand well the Order and Distribution of this admirable Epistle, it must be noted that the whole Aim and Scope of it is comprehended in certain Verses or Propositions scattered and frequently resum'd by the Apostle through the whole Body of the Epistle; and

and that what lies between two or more of these Verses or principal Propositions, are either Explications or Amplifications of them, or some Difficulties or Objections that fall in his way, which the Apostle answers as he goes along, and so proceeds from one principal and capital Truth to another. This I take to be the Plan of this Epistle, which I am about to set down in Propositions, that shall afterwards be each of them resumed and briefly considered to shew their Connection, their Incidents, and true Sense.

I. *Proposition the first.* I Paul intend to preach unto you, both Jews and Greeks that are at *Rome*, the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, which is a powerful Means made use of by God to save those that shall receive it by Faith. Chap. i. 14, 15, 16.

II. *Prop.* This Gospel sent from Heaven fully discovers to Men the Divine Righteousness which must be embraced and received by Faith, if they mean to be righteous and live for ever: for the Righteous only shall live and be saved, and this Life is an Effect of Faith, which produces Righteousness. Chap. i. 17.

III. *Prop.* God has in former Times manifested and declared to and in the Heathen the Truth of his Righteousness; but they abused it; they wilfully and maliciously despised, forgot and perverted it, Chap. i. 18, 19, 21, 32.

IV. *Prop.* God has likewise manifested this Divine Righteousness to the Jews by the Law of the Prophets (Chap. 3. 21.) and by other great Advantages. But they have gone farther from it than the Heathen. Chap. 2.

V. *Prop.* Now, God manifests to all, Jews and Gentiles promiscuously, the Truth of his Divine Righteousness by another Way than by the Light of Nature and of the Law, viz. by the Faith of *Jesus Christ*; whom he has appointed to that Purpose that every one that shall partake of his Blood by Faith, may be made Righteous by the Grace of God, who will shew forth and confirm his Righteousness in such a one by blotting out and making to disappear (*δια τῆς πίστεως*) his former Sins, and by declaring that at present such a Person is Righteous and by him justified. Chap. 3. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.

VI. *Prop.*

Chap.
XV.



VI. *Prop.* 'Tis by Faith, and not by the Works of the Law that Man receives the Righteousness of God. Chap. 3. 27.

VII. *Prop.* Those that are justified by Faith are restored to Peace with God. Chap. 5. 1, 2.

VIII. *Prop.* This Peace is so solid, that Tribulations cannot shake it, as being an Effect of God's Spirit, which was given us by the same Love through which the Son of God was delivered up for us; that he might make Grace and Righteousness more abound in all those that partake of him through Faith, than *Adam* made Sins and Unrighteousness to descend on all those that partake of him by the Birth they draw from him. Chap. 5. 3. 5, 8, 17, &c.

IX. *Prop.* The Justified, upon their Death unto Sin, are regenerated by the Spirit of God, are the Sons of God, and in this Quality shall be Heirs of his Glory, but yet upon condition that they suffer in this World, as *Jesus Christ* did. Chap. 8. 2, 4, 9, 10, 16, 17.

X. *Prop.* The Gentiles have been admitted to Righteousness by Faith without the Works of the Law: but the *Israelites* having sought this Righteousness of God, and the Adoption to be his Sons, by the Works of the Law, and not by Faith, have been justly rejected of God, and fallen from their Pretensions, without God's doing any thing therein against his Promises, and his equitable Justice. Chap. 9. 6, 14, 31.

XI. *Prop.* The Righteousness of God is not tyed to the Letter of the Law, nor to any external Observances; but to *Jesus Christ*, who is the inward Light, Voice, and Word in the Heart of all Men. Chap. 10. 4, 5. 18.

XII. *Prop.* The *Israelites* are not absolutely and for ever rejected of God. But when they shall submit to the Faith in Vacuity and Humility of Heart, God will again take them into his Favour. Chap. 11. 1, 25.

XIII. *Prop.* It shall one Day really come to pass that all the Jewish Nation shall be converted to the Righteousness of God by the coming of *Jesus Christ*: God having chosen their Fathers to be glorified by their Race. Chap. 11. 26, 27, 28.

XIV. *Prop.* Do not any longer serve God with Jewish Worship: but let your Service be spiritual and true, con-

consisting in a Life holy and consecrated to God. Ch. Chap.
12. I. XV.

XV. Prop. Practice with Joy, Patience, and continual Prayer, all Sorts of Vertues towards your Brethren, Neighbours, and very Enemies. *Ibid.* 3, &c.

XVI. Prop. Submit your selves to the higher Powers out of a Principle of Conscience. Chap. 13. 1, 5.

XVII. Prop. Be just and charitable to all. Ch. 13. 7, 8.

XVIII. Prop. Dispute not with those that are weak and mean well, do not condemn, nor give offence to them in their Weakness, though their Opinions be false: but rather condescend to them, and edifie them in Peace, as was the Practice of *Jesus Christ*. Chap.

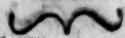
14. 1, 3, 15, 19. Chap. 15. 1, 2, 3.

XIX. Prop. *Jesus Christ* being a Minister not only of the Jews but of the Gentiles also, and having entrusted me with the Ministry towards the latter, I have discharged my Duty to you, having written freely to you; which I shall continue toward you and towards all by all possible Expressions of Duty. Chap. 15. 8, 9, 15, 16, &c. 30. Chap. 16.

This I take to be the general Plan of this Epistle. I shall now make some Reflexions upon these Propositions as far as shall be necessary to clear them, and as they concern the Subject in hand, and indeed all those Truths I have proposed in the foregoing Tracts; which I will cite as I go along to shew their Conformity with the Doctrine of *St. Paul*.

Upon the first Proposition, it must be observed who I. Prop. they are the Apostle addresses himself to, what he pro- Whom poses to say to them, and the Nature of it. He de- St. Paul signs to speak to *Jews and Gentiles*; and therefore it is speaks to, that he applies himself sometimes to one, as Chap. 1. his Aim; and sometimes to t'other, Chap 2. and then to both to- the Nature gether, Chap. 3. Now he returns to the Jews, pre- of the Go- vents their Objections, and answers them, Chap. 4, 7, spel. 9, 10, 11. then to the Gentiles, Chap. 11, 15. He tells them he intends to *preach to them the Gospel*, that is to say, he intends to let them know, that God instead of leaving them in a State of Damnation, in which they naturally are since *Adam's Sin* (as has been seen in the Three first Chapters of the Third (a) Treatise) and (a) Vol into which they are continually plunging themselves III.

Chap.
XV.



deeper and deeper by their own Sins, designs to deliver them out of it by *Jesus Christ*, and that therefore the Gospel is stiled the *Gospel of Jesus Christ*, who is the Person that has obtain'd by his Mediation this Deliverance: (agreeably to what has been shewn in the Third Treatise (a)).

(a) Vol.

III. Chap.

4, and 5.

The Nature of the thing *St. Paul* proposes to declare to them, or of the Gospel, is, *that it is the Power of God*, but is such only to *Believers*, or to those that receive it by Faith. Of all the Means God has ever made use of to communicate the Grace of Deliverance to Man, the most powerful is the preaching of the Gospel; nevertheless while Men receive it with their humane Reason only, and let the Ideas and Persuasion of it stick there, it proves inefficacious, weak, and a Letter that kills, and no more than legal Preaching. To be receiv'd and relish'd as savingly living, it must be receiv'd by the Faith of the Heart: then does God powerfully work in the Heart by his Evangelical Grace, and there produces the Operations of Salvation; and so the Gospel becomes the Power of God to Salvation to all that believe: which Truths have likewise been explain'd by me in the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Chapters of the forecited Treatise.

What the
Righteous-
ness of God
is, which
the Gospel
proposes.

II. Prop. In the second Proposition, which is taken out of Chap. 1. v. 17. the Apostle supposes it impossible to enjoy the Deliverance preach'd by the Gospel, but by the Possession of God's Righteousness, which the Gospel does likewise fully declare. This Righteousness is not that Righteousness of God by which he renders to every one according to his Works, (of which I have

(b) Vol.

3. Ch. 4.

S 6, & 24.

Oecon.

before

the Inc.

spoken in the Third (b) Treatise) but that we spake of a little lower (c), and which I have largely treated of in the Eighth Chapter of the Co-operation. It is call'd the Righteousness of God, because it is God that is the Author and producing Cause of it, and works it in the Hearts of those that are by Faith resign'd up to him: for Faith is the Means by which the Righteous live, and receive the Operation of God, his Grace, and his Divine Righteousness, which is the Food of his Soul. The same Righteousness is call'd Divine, because it is worthy of God, because it can subsist and stand the Tryal before him. It is a State wherein nei-

(c) Ibid.

S 24. n.

2, 3.

ther

ther God nor the Devil can find any thing to blame or condemn (a). This **RIGHTEOUSNESS** is the main Business of the Gospel.

Chap. XV.

To save the Reader the trouble of looking any where else than here for the Propositions I make Reflexions upon, I shall repeat them as they come in Order. I cou'd wish likewise he had before him the Text of this Epistle of St. Paul.

(a) Rom. 8. v. 1. Oecon. of the Co-op. Ch. 8.

III. Prop. God had before manifested and declar'd to the Gentiles and in them the Truth of his Righteousness; but they had abus'd it; they had wilfully and maliciously despis'd, forgotten, and perverted it (b).

The Righteousness of God manifested inwardly to the Gentiles was by them rejected.

Reflexions. The Apostle taking it for granted, that God always will'd the Salvation and Deliverance of all Men, shews that he had manifested to their Interiour all that cou'd or ought to be known concerning this Righteousness which God requir'd of them, and which he is willing to work in the Hearts of those that shall with Humility and Self-denial hearken to his Interiour Word (c). So that the Substance of the Gospel was not absolutely unknown to them, tho' but obscurely and imperfectly manifested. It is as clear as the Day, that this is the Truth St. Paul intends to inculcate thro' the whole First Chapter, and in part of the Second and Tenth. Yet, he there shews, that the Generality of the Heathen abus'd this Grace, and Divine Dispensation towards them, excepting some few good Men among them (d). We have shewn the same Truth in our Third Treatise (e), where we have noted, that God intending to try two kinds of Ways to save Men by, the inward and merely natural, and by the positive Revelation, (which was the way he us'd towards the Jews) the Gentiles did not correspond to the way he took with them, saving a very few, who thereby attain'd to the Theory and Practice of the Substance of the Gospel: but that this concludes nothing as to the Generality, who render'd this way ineffectual as to themselves. Now we will see what the others did in their way.

(b) Ch. 1. 18, 19, 21, 32, &c.

(c) Rom. 2. 15. and Ch. 10. 8. and 18.

(d) Rom. 2. 10, 14, 15, 26, 27.

(e) Vol. 3. Ch. 11. § 14. and Chap. 13.

IV. Prop. God manifested likewise to the Jews by the Law and the Prophets (f), and by other great and considerable

The Jews having God's Righteous-

P 2

ness manifested to them by the Law, rejected it and perverted the Law. (f) Rom. 3. 21. and Chap. 10. 4.

Chap. XV. *able Advantages (a) this Divine Righteousness. But they forsook it worse than the Gentiles.*

Reflex. This is undoubtedly the Sum and Substance of what St. Paul intends through the whole Second, and in the places already noted of the Third and Tenth Chapters. Nor need I insist upon his Amplification of this Matter. But I desire you to remember what I have shewn in the Third Treatise (b), which amounts to this; that Men turning away their Attention from the inward Light of the Heart, God communicated himself to them by Apparitions, Ceremonies, and Revelations, which awaken'd in their Minds the Ideas of that Righteousness, to which they were inclin'd and mov'd by the internal Light of the Heart, and of that Unrighteousness from which it likewise dissuaded them. Thus we see how God gave the Law to lead them and bring them to the inward Light of Faith. But we shall see the terrible and fatal Sophism they committed in this Matter. Instead of turning themselves towards Faith, or towards the inward Light of the Heart, that is to say, towards God himself working in their Interiour, that they might obtain by the Divine Power of Faith strength to ratifie, and livingly to fulfil what the Law and the Ideas of it shew'd to be just; they stuck close to their Reason, and went about to fulfil and acquire by their own proper Strength, and by the corrupt Motions of their own Will, the Righteousness which the Law declar'd and exacted of them; and Man's Powers being corrupt and good for nothing, they cou'd not but miscarry and be lost in the Use of them. And so by their own Will, their own Endeavours, and legal Works, they fell from Faith and the true Righteousness of God, and sunk into all manner of Disorders, Darknes and Miseries: as I shall hereafter observe they did, and that almost in every thing.

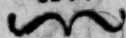
God manifests his Righteousness to all by Jesus Christ thro' Faith. V. Prop. Now God declares to all, Jews and Gentiles without Distinction, the truth of his Divine Righteousness by another way than by a mere natural Light and the Law, viz. by Jesus Christ.

Reflex. The Apostle has shewn from the 21st. Verse of the 1st. Chapter to the 20th. of the 3^d. that these two Dispensations of God, the one, whereby he left the Gentiles

Gentiles purely to the internal Light, and the other, Chap. XV. whereby he awakened the Jews by the Ministry of the Law, to bring them back to the Righteousness of God, proved ineffectual; and that the Jews were resolved to practice the Law by their own corrupt Reason and Strength, and not by Faith. And therefore, he says, that God now opens a (a) new Period or Dispensation (a) See the to make known to them his Righteousness, the very fifth Peri- od. Oec. fame Righteousness which the Law and the Prophets de- clared to them speculatively (b). That God manifests after Jesus it by the faith of Jesus Christ (ὁ δὲ πιστὸς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, v. 22.) Christ, Ch. 1, &c. that is to say, by such a Faith by which Jesus Christ lives in us, (as he explains himself in another Place) (c), By a Faith of the same Nature with that of Jesus (b) Rom. Christ, by a Faith which being the Faith of the Son of 3. 21. God, and being the true Light, does in us what it did (c) Gal. 2. in him, makes us mortify and sacrifice the old Man, 20. and makes us present our selves Oblations to God. For (to continue the Proposition in the Apostle's own Terms ver. 23, 24, 25.) God has constituted Jesus Christ, that whoever partakes of his blood by Faith should be made righteous by his Grace.

Reflex. Faith is always the same under all Dis- What it is penlations; but it having been ill treated among the to be justifi- Gentiles and Jews, God renews it and proposes it in fied by his Son where it is efficacious, active, living and in- Faith in corruptible. Now the Faith of God wrought in Jesus the Blood Christ the Sacrifice of himself. And this is what God of Jesus Christ proposes to us: a Conformity and real Participation of the Sacrifice and Blood of Jesus Christ by Faith, or a Faith that renders us Partakers by Conformity and real Influence of the Sacrifice and Blood of Jesus Christ. When we wholly resign our selves up to it we are re- deemed and delivered from all Unrighteousness, and to use the Apostles Words, (ver. 24.) God declares and makes visible in us his divine Righteousness, in causing to pass away (I remember I have elsewhere (d) given ano- (d) Oec. ther Signification to this Word but as this seems to me of Co-op. more agreeable to the Sense of the Apostle, I prefer it Ch. 8. § 7. before the first) and disappear, the former Sins that he had tolerated in us; and this manifests that God is Righteous and a Lover of Righteousness and Purity; and that he makes righteous by the Operation of his Grace

Chap. XV. all such as resign themselves up to the Faith of Jesus Christ sacrificed and crucified for us. I have elsewhere



(a) Oec. of Co-op. Ch. 5. § 12.

(b) Oec. before the Inc. of Jesus Christ, Ch. 17. § 11. n. 13, 16, 17, 18.

(c) Oec. of the Co-op. Chap. 8.

It is by Faith and not by the Law that we receive the Righteousness of God.

VI. Prop. It is by Faith and not by the Works of the Law, that Man receives the Righteousness of God (d).

Reflex. This is the Apostle's main Conclusion, nor can any thing be clearer to any one that does but understand the Terms of it. The Righteousness of God, or that righteous State wherein there is no longer any thing that deserves Condemnation, is gratuitously wrought by God in Man through Faith, through the inward and operative Light of the Son of God in the Heart, and not by the Works of the Law, by the carnal Endeavours of a Soul that without Self-resignation to God, only consults and makes use of its own corrupt Powers, Activity and Will and its own barren Speculations and therewith thinks, to satisfy God and the Law.

(d) Rom. 3. 27.

The Apostle shews that this way by Faith excludes Pride (ver. 26) *where is Boasting?* and in the second Place, that it satisfies the Law of God, *establishes it*, (ver. 30.) and even *fulfils it* (Chap. 8, ver. 4.) The Apostle in the fourth Chapter confirms his Doctrine from the Example of *Abraham*. As I intend not a Comment upon this Epistle, but only some Remarks on the Design and capital Propositions of it, I shall say nothing on this Amplification of the Apostle's. He that understands what I have here said, as well as elsewhere concerning Justification and Faith, will with great Satisfaction observe how Faith acts in all the Apostle says concerning *Abraham*, who through it entered into a State of Righteousness well pleasing to God, not only in quality of a particular faithful Person, but also as a Father of the Faithful, and as an elect and chosen Stock from which the Race of Saints was to be perpetuated.

We may hence observe that there is an Election to the Quality of a particular faithful Person or Son of God, and to the Quality of a faithful Head, and Father of the Faithful; (in Virtue of which Election God will one day convert the Jews when they come to know themselves and acknowledge their Error) in like manner that there is also a Righteousness requisite to make one simply a faithful Person, and a Righteousness required to qualify one to be a Father of the Faithful, but that they all proceed from Faith. Go we on to the next.

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VII. Prop. Those that are justified by Faith have Peace with God (a). Justification is followed with Peace.

Reflex. This Peace follows not only the real Righteousness which God has wrought in Man by the Light of the Faith of Jesus Christ; but also, and chiefly, it follows the Declaration that God has made in the Soul that it is righteous in his Divine eyes. This Matter I have explain'd in the Eighth and Ninth Chapters of the Co-operation. (a) Rom. 5, 1, 2.

VIII. Prop. This Peace is so solid that Tribulation cannot ruffle it, &c. (b). This Peace is solid

Reflex. The Apostle reckons among the Effects of this Divine Peace an undaunted Confidence and Firmness in the Midst of Tribulations, for this Reason, because God loves those that are justified, and has given to them the Spirit of Love, ver. 6. and because he had even before they were justified given Jesus Christ for Sinners, ver. 8, by whom all that are in him by Faith are much more reconciled to God and more abundantly filled with Righteousness and Grace, than those that are in Adam are shut up in Enmity with God in Unrighteousness, Sin and Death. and of Proof, being the Effect of the Grace of God which is more abundant and strong upon such as are in Jesus Christ, than Evil is upon such as are in Adam.

Hereupon he draws a Parallel between the Gift of Righteousness which they that are in Jesus Christ partake of, and the unhappy Natural and Adamical Gift of Sin and Condemnation which all they partake of that are still in Adam and in the old Birth which they derive from him. A Truth this that I have treated of in the Oeconomy of Sin Chap. 15, 16, 17. (b) Rom. 5, 3, 5, &c.

In the Sixth and Seventh Chapters the Apostle answers a Difficulty that came in his Way. He had said (Chap. 5, ver. 20.) that the Law having discovered

The subject Matter of the sixth and seventh

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the Abundance of Sin, Grace shewed its Abundance in the Justified proportionably as Sin had before abounded in them, and indeed more. Upon which it is objected. What then? *shall we sin on, that Grace may shew how abundant it is?* Chap. 6. ver. 1. which Objection he answers many Ways.

First he shews that this Objection contradicts it self or its own Supposition. For (ver. 2.) a justified Person is entirely dead to Sin. Now it is a Contradiction for him to be dead to it and yet to live still in it.

Secondly, he proves the same Thing from Baptism of which they that are justified were Partakers. He says (ver. 3, 4, and 5.) that by it they are dead to the old Life and are raised again in the new.

In the *third* Place, he insists upon this, (ver. 6, 7.) that to be justify'd, it is first necessary that the Old Man, the System of Sin, be antecedently destroy'd, none being declar'd *righteous* and absolv'd *from Sin*, but *he that is dead to it*, ver. 7.

Lastly, He shews the Absurdity of that Objection from the Consideration of the State of Liberty or Slavery we are reduc'd to by obeying either God or Sin.

He carries the same Difficulty yet further in the Seventh Chapter, and seems to be pleas'd with a thorow canvassing and removing of it, to live without sinning being the chief and principal Business of Christians. He shews the Jews how they formerly adhered to the Law, to the fruitless Theory of Good and Evil, and to their own Strength and Wills in what is prescrib'd, as a Woman sticks to her Husband: and that there was no Reason to marvel, that the impotent Law could not then beget anything in their carnal Souls but the Fruits of Death and Sin. But their Husband (the Law) being now dead with respect to them, and they to it; and seeing they, (according to the Permission even of their own Law) had espous'd another Husband, *Jesus Christ*, it would be Adultery in them still to bring forth the Fruits of Sin which would again subject 'em to the Bondage of the Law, by leaving and forsaking the living and new Spirit of Faith. Then he takes away an Objection which might be made as if he spoke dishonourably of the Law (ver. 7.) and shewing to the End of the Chapter the Use of the Law, and of what Service

Service it is to one that has a mind to attain to a State of Righteousness, he lets us see how he himself proceeded, and the different Degrees he pass'd through to arrive at Justification and Regeneration. I have explain'd this elsewhere (a), and so ends the Seventh Chapter. The following Proposition belongs to the Eighth.

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(a) Oec.
of Co-op.
ch 9. § 43.

IX. Prop. *The Justified are upon their death unto Sin, Those that born again through God's Spirit, and are his Children; and are justified in that Quality shall be Heirs of his Glory, but yet upon ed are born Condition that they suffer in this World as Jesus Christ again, and did (b).*

come to the
Divine In-
heritance,
but thro'
Sufferings.

Reflex. The Apostle shews here admirably well (ver. 1. to the 13th.) how such as are justified sin no more, nor live after the Flesh, nor set their Affections on the things of the Flesh; but that on the contrary they have the Affections, Motions and Works of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, by which they livingly accomplish that Righteousness which the Law coldly declar'd and fruitlessly requir'd of carnal Persons. This has been explain'd in the Treatise of the Co-operation (c). Then he says (ver. 15, &c.) that those that are justified *having receiv'd the Holy Spirit*, are thereby regenerated and become the Sons of God, and as such are introduced into the Inheritance of all God's Goods; but that before they are glorified, they must suffer.

(b) Chap.
8. v. 2, 4,
9, 10, 16,
17.

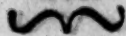
(c) Ch. XI.

Those that are like to suffer need something to hearten them up and encourage them. The Apostle does this from many Heads. 1. *First*, by comparing the Glory which will follow their Sufferings, which Glory is such that all the Creatures pant after it. Upon this, he reveals (ver. 20.) this great Secret, that Men have so little thought of, that all Creatures were created in that glorious State to which they shall at last be restored, and that it was the Sin of Man only that covered them with Darkness and subjected them to Corruption; that they have still within them (ver. 21.) a Spring and Principle that presses to be delivered, and to throw off this corrupt Matter; and that (ver. 22.) they shall actually do it as soon as the Sons of God shall be delivered from their Corruption and re-instated in the Liberty of their primitive Glory, after which they earnestly breath and sigh, waiting that as their

Consolati-
ons for such
as are so
suffer.

Souls

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(a) Oec.

before

the Inc.

of Jesus

Christ, ch.

2. n. 10.

Souls are already redeemed from the Sins they had contracted, till their Bodies too be redeemed from that corruptible and gross State brought upon them by Sin, before which they were in the Liberty of Glory, I have given the System of this great Truth through the whole Treatise of the Oeconomy of the Creation, and in another Place besides (a).

In the *Second* Place the Apostle comforts the Children of God as to their Sufferings, from this Consideration, that the Desire which they have of Glory shall not be frustrated, forasmuch as the *Spirit* of God himself is concerned in that Desire of theirs, and does it self pray and ask in them and *for them what Man cannot comprehend, and what is pleasing to God* (ver. 26.)

Lastly, he comforts them (ver. 28.) by the Consideration, that *all* that befalls them *shall turn to their good*, because *they love God*, and God will on his Part answer their Love by all Care of them imaginable, and by all Expressions of his fatherly Kindness. Upon this Head he goes on to the End of the Chapter, explaining and shewing God's Perseverance towards us, provided we on our Part continue and persevere in our Love towards him (ver. 27.). These Things I have explained in the Tenth Chapter of the Treatise of Co-operation.

An Explanation
of
the 28th.
and 29th.
Verses.

There is some Difficulty in the 28th and 29th Verses, where the Apostle speaks of Predestination. For at first Sight Men think they see in them an absolute and personal Predestination to Faith, or Salvation, according to their preconceived Notion of the Matter. Nevertheless the Apostle had no such Thing in his Thoughts, neither here nor any where else. The true Sense of these Words which depends on the 27th. Verse is this.

To comfort God's Children he tells them, that *all Things*, even their very Afflictions *turn to their good*, because *they love God* and that they do not fall into Dangers and Afflictions through their own imprudent and ill Conduct, but that God engages them in them by his Providence, by his calling them thereto upon some special Design of his, Which Conduct of his they shou'd not think strange, seeing God makes use of Sufferings even after their Justification, as well as before it,

to

to lead Man into the Death of the old Life, to crucifie and mortifie his old *Adam* in Conformity to the Image of the Suffering *Jesus Christ*: for (ver. 28.) thus God proceeds. His Design is to have Sons and Heirs, and so likewise he determines the Ways by which they shall be made such. These Sons and Heirs whom he foreknew, and of whom he formed the general Idea and Foreknowledge, before there were actually any such, he from that Time and before they were in Being, destined and ordained to suffer inwardly and outwardly with *Jesus Christ*, that they might die to the old Man by Conformity to the Image of his Death, and be sanctified by the same Means he was (a) and made like their elder Brother. (a) Heb. 2. 10, 11. And those whom he thus predestinated and before appointed (b) to Afflictions and Sufferings, he also calls thereto, (b) 1 Thess. 3. 3. and in time effectually engages them in them, so purifying them from their Sins and sanctifying them by Afflictions, after which he justifies them, and then glorifies them; but always after their having suffered, as he said before ver. 17. The Order of this Procedure I have elsewhere touch'd on (c).

The Rest of the Chapter has no Difficulty in it, or if it have you may meet with a Solution (d). (c) Oec. of Co op. Chap. 7. § 1, 2. (d) Ib. Ch. 10. § 41.

C H A P. XVI.

An Explication of the Ninth Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.



WE are now come to the Ninth Chapter of this Epistle, which is the strong Hold or chief Pretext for a rigid Predestination. With what right we shall see presently. In the mean while consider we the main Proposition of the Chapter which is this.

X. Prop. *The Gentiles have been received into Righteousness through Faith, without the Law: but the Israelites Draught of having sought this Righteousness of God and the Adoption of the Chapp- Sons through the Works of the Law, and not through Faith, ter.*
have

(a) Ch. 9. have been justly rejected of God and fallen from their Pretensions, God thereby no Way acting either against his Promises or his Equity and Justice (a)

Three things to be consider'd in this Chapter. 1. The State of the Question. 2. An Answer to a Difficulty with regard to God's Truth. 3.

Reflex. This Proposition is a Compend of the whole Chapter, and as that, contains Three principal Members. The *First* contains the State of the Question, and concerns the Rejection of the Jews, and the Receiving of the Gentiles. Of this the Apostle speaks from the 24th. Verse to the End of the Chapter; but chiefly in the 30th. 31st. 32d. Verses. The *Second* Member is an Answer to a Difficulty, whether this may be done saving the Truth of God's Promises, which he treats of from the 6th. to the 13th. Verse. The *Third* is a Solution of another Difficulty, whether this Proceedure be not against the Justice of God, and this is treated of from the 15th. to the 23d. Verse.

First. The State of the Question of the Ninth Chapter.

1. The Apostle that he might not offend nor provoke those of his own Nation, does not only make a softening Preface in the five first Verses of this Chapter, but likewise waves the State of the Question and the Conclusion, which was odious to the Jews, it being about the casting of them off and Admission of the Gentiles, to the End of the Chapter, ver. 30, 31, and 32. *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles who sought not after Righteousness (by the Works of the Law) have obtained Righteousness, I say, the Righteousness that comes by Faith.* But that Israel seeking the Law of Righteousness (the Principle that makes us righteous) has not attained the Law of Righteousness. *Wherefore? Because they did not do it by Faith, but as designing to obtain it by the Works of the Law.*

These Words plainly note 1. the State of the Question, viz. whether it were true that upon the Gentiles their being received to Righteousness, the Jews were fallen from it. 2. The Apostle's Conclusion (that so it was) back'd with his Reasons for it, one, that the Gentiles had submitted to the Way of Faith, and had not adhered to that of Works; and the other, because the Jews wou'd needs stick to the way of Works to attain Righteousness, and not take the way of Faith, Whence it follows, that they justly fell from their Pretensions

tensions of being Righteous, and the Sons and Heirs of God, when as the Gentiles were admitted to these very Prerogatives.

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It appears as clear as the Day from the reading of this Chapter, especially from the Ten last Verses of it, from the Tenth Chapter and the Eleventh, and from the Eleventh Verse of it to the Thirty first, that in the first Place, this is the State of the Question and the Subject treated of; and that St. Paul never thought here (no more than any where else) of any pretended absolute and personal Predestination of certain Individuals some to Life and others to Death Eternal, without any regard to the different Dispositions and Carriage of such Persons. This appears to be so, in the second Place, because neither the Jews of those Times, nor of ours, ever pretended to such a Predestination, nor do they yet know any thing of it; nor did they ever make this the Matter of any Difficulty against the Gentiles, or ever held that the Gentiles were reprobated by any pretended absolute Decree. This Observation alone, which cannot be doubted, is enough to overthrow all the pretended Proofs Men fancy they see in this and the following Chapters of an absolute Predestination. But very unfortunately for that Doctrine, St. Paul never so much as thought of it, and in this Epistle and the Ninth Tenth and Eleventh Chapters of it, which are alledged in its behalf, he is treating of quite another thing.

never so much as thought of a rigid Predestination.

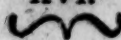
Men fancy that the Question here is to know, whether certain particular Persons are from Eternity predestinated of God, some to Life and others to Death Everlasting; and that in Consequence of this, the Means of Salvation be not designed and reach'd out to the one, and were never intended for the other. And they believe that so it is. And this God's dealing they ground upon a mere good Pleasure of his that has no regard to any Difference in the Persons; and this is what they look to find in St. Paul.

Men put a different Question in the room of St. Paul's.

Whereas St. Paul's Intent is to shew, how God having at first tryed to save all Men, Jews and Gentiles by the way of true Righteousness, after having drawn the Gentiles to it by the Light of Nature, and the Jews by the Law, and then both together by the Preaching

of

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of the Gospel ; how it fell out that the Gentiles were by God admitted to this Righteousness and the Prerogatives of it, which were to become the Children and Heirs of God ; and that the Jews were excluded and cast off from all these Advantages. And the Apostle's Answer to this is, that, the Reason of this different Treatment of the Jews and Gentiles, and of the different Way of God's dealing with them is grounded upon this, that the one to come to what they were, proceeded by the way of *Faith* ; but that the other instead of endeavouring after Righteousness by *Faith*, would needs attain it by the *Works of the Law* (a). And is not this an infinitely different thing from a rigid Predestination ? Is it not perfectly opposite to it ? and does it not even overturn and ruine the very Foundation of this chimerical Fancy, viz. the pretended Good pleasure of God that has no regard to the difference of Mens Dispositions and Behaviour ?

(a) Rom.
9. 30, 32.

(b) In the
Oec. of
Sin, Ch.
2. § 3, 4.

(c) In the
Oec. be-
fore Je-
sus Christ,
Chap. 15.
§ 19.

(2.) The
second part
of this
Chapter :
a Difficulty
in relation
to the Truth
of God.

And I might stop here and rest satisfied with this Truth that overthrows the Foundation of all the Difficulties and Glosses that are put upon the following Texts of the Apostle : to which may be added the Explication I have already given of some of these Verses (b) ; and also what has been said of the Plan of the Election and Reprobation of the Jews (c), as well as of the Gentiles with respect to what *St. Paul* teaches concerning this Point in the Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Chapters of this Epistle. I desire those places may be consulted ; for though I intend to make some Reflexions as well upon the following Texts of the Apostle, as upon the rest of my Propositions, yet I shall not designedly explain some things which I suppose already clear'd.

(2.) The Apostle having ver. 4. and 5. own'd the Advantages of the Israelites, that the Adoption of Sons, the Glory of being God's People, the Covenant of God often renew'd with them, the Law, and the Ceremonies and all the Promises of God were all their peculiar Privileges, and at the same time teaching that God had rejected them from being his Children and truly Righteous, and from effectually enjoying his Promises, answers (ver. 6.) this Objection, that then the

Word

Word and Promises of God wou'd be deceitful and changeable.

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He answers no, they wou'd not : and the Reason he gives for it is this, that altho' God made his Promises generally to *Israel* and to *Abraham's* Race ; yet was it not his Will to mean, own and chuse for *Israelites* and *Abraham's* Seed such as were carnally so, and who from a presumptuous Conceit of this Advantage and of all the other of Laws, Revelations, and Worship, shou'd pretend that by virtue of this and of their own busying themselves and Thoughts about these Matters God must necessarily own 'em and take 'em for his Children and for righteous Persons, and use 'em as such. No, this was none of God's Pleasure nor his Intention. And why was it not ? Because God being the God of the Heart, and of the spiritual, humble and clean Heart ; he cannot take Pleasure in Hearts that are carnal, proud, and cleaving to self, He cannot fix neither his Grace nor his Delight in such, neither by Promise, nor in Effect. But his Pleasure, his Will, his Decree, is, not to mean nor own for *Israelites*, not to take for *Abraham's* Seed, not to hold, chuse or declare to be his People, his Children, and Righteous, any but those only whose Hearts were humble and full of Faith, and so were the true Children of *Abraham* according to the Spirit. Such is God's good Pleasure, and this is his Decree of Election to Righteousness, to Adoption, and to the effectual partaking of his Promises. Nor must any pretend to thrust themselves into a Right to them, by following his own Way and Will, how Good and Holy soever he may fancy it ; but must submit to God's good Pleasure, upon which all depends, as on its only Reason and Cause.

Who the true Children of Abraham are, and the Israelites to whom the Promises were made.

Now (ver. 7.) all this was clear from the very first, in the two first Children *Abraham* had ; for God having promised this Patriarch to make use of him and his Posterity as Vessels and Conduits of his Graces, as well for themselves, as by them to perpetuate and communicate them to others ; *Ismael*, the Son of the Bond-woman and the Scoffer, though the carnal Son of *Abraham*, was not for all that accounted his Son ; but *Isaac* the meek and the humble and the Son of the Free-woman was accounted his Seed : to give us to understand

The first Example by which St. Paul proves this Truth. *Ismael* and *Isaac*.

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(a) Gal. 4.
v. 21, &c.
and especially,
v. 28,
29, 30, 31.

The second
Example
of Jacob
and Esau.

derstand that God will not own or chuse for his Children, to whom he has promised Righteousness and Grace, but such only who being far from confidently presuming upon their carnal Advantages, and scoffing at the supernatural Grace of God, shall humbly and freely resign up themselves to this pure Grace and good Will of God. The Apostle very clearly explains the same Thing elsewhere (a).

In the 10th. Verse of this Chapter he further evinces this by the Example or Emblem of the Sons of Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Esau. For ver. 11. *that the Purpose and Decree of God concerning the Election which he designed to make and perpetuate in Isaac's Race might be ratified and accomplished in the foresaid Race; and that it might appear that this was not made by Virtue of any carnal Prerogatives or Works, but by the Virtue and Grace of him that calls and works inwardly, God before the Birth of the Sons of Isaac, and before they had done any thing that might give the one any Advantage over the other, says and makes a Declaration concerning them and their Descendants.*

And what was this Declaration? Was it that God wou'd own for his, and wou'd prefer him that adhered most to self, to his Advantages and natural Strength, to his own Skill and Exploits, and that shou'd seem greatest in his own Eyes?

The Election of Jacob signifies that God chuses those that resign

themselves to his good Spirit of Humility and Faith: and the Rejection of Esau notes that God reprobates the Spirit of Pride

Far from this: he declares that *the greater*, he that wou'd be presumptuous, self-adhering, and trusting to his own natural Strength and Works, shou'd be *inferiour* postponed before God to *him that was less*, that was loosened from self and resigned to God in Humility.

Thus we see how God declares his Choice of the Spirit of Humility, of Faith and Resignation to him, and that he rejects the Spirit of Pride and Presumption.

Now Jacob had such a Spirit of Meekness, Humility, Simplicity and Faith: and Esau had a Spirit of Presumption, Grandeur, of Esteem of himself and his own Works, both himself and Posterity. Therefore by Virtue of this Declaration Jacob (as likewise all such as wou'd give themselves up to be led by his Spirit) ought to be approved and chosen of God; and Esau

of Pride and of corrupt and carnal Nature, and all such as adhere to it.

Eſau (as long as himſelf and his Race ſhou'd continue in their Spirit of Corruption and Pride) was to be rejected and paſſed by. And this is what came to paſs. For the Scripture ſays, that God loved *Jacob*, the ſimple and the humble of Spirit, and that *he* hated and deſpiſed *Eſau*, the preſumptuous and proud of heart. And this is to be underſtood with Reference to their Perſons as well as to their Poſterity, while they continue in the ſame Diſpoſitions of Heart. For God will never own and chuſe for his Children but only the humble Spirit of *Jacob*, which is the ſame Spirit *Jeſus Chriſt* is of, nor does he reject any but the preſumptuous Spirit of *Eſau*, which is the Spirit of corrupt Nature, and of the very Devil himſelf.

Thus is the firſt Difficulty vaniſhed. For ſince it appears that the Promiſes of God regard only Souls humble and reſigned to the Spirit of his Grace, and not at all ſuch as are preſuming and ſtiſly adhering to their own Activity; it hence follows, that God has not failed in his Promiſes, though the Jews be rejected and the Gentiles received and owned of God: becauſe theſe Jews had the carnal, mercenary, preſumptuous and arrogant Spirit of *Iſmael* and *Eſau*; and the Gentiles abandoned themſelves to the humble and faithful Spirit of *Jacob*, as ſoon as it pleaſed God to manifeſt it to them by the Goſpel.

(3.) We are now come to the third Difficulty in this ſame Procedure of God ver. 14. But how is it? *What ſhall we ſay then?* Does not this look as if there were Unrighteouſneſs in God, thus to make ſerious and general Promiſes to *Abraham*, to *Iſrael*, and to all their Deſcendants, and yet not to keep and make good his Word to thoſe that can effectually make it out to him that they are the true Race of *Abraham* and *Iſrael*? But God forbid we ſhou'd upon this Score ſuſpect him of Unrighteouſneſs!

The Reason is this, becauſe God cannot affix his Grace and Mercy to Fleſh and Blood, and much leſs to a preſumptuous Confidence in them; he can annex it only to his own juſt and holy Will, and to ſuch Diſpoſitions as are pleaſing and agreeable to himſelf; for (ver. 15.) *he ſays to Moſes, I will have Compaſſion on whom it is my Pleaſure to have Compaſſion, and will ſhew Mercy on*

(3.) The
third
Branch
of this
Chapter:
A Diffi-
culty with
relation to
the Juſtice
of God.

To whom
God will
ſhew Mer-
cy.

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whom it is my Will to shew Mercy; and not I will shew Mercy on them whom Men shall please to think I ought to shew Mercy, upon Pretence of such and such Dispositions of theirs which themselves are highly pleased with, but which displease me exceedingly. It is their-Part to resign themselves up to such Dispositions as are agreeable to my good Pleasure and Will, seeing my good Pleasure and Will are the Fountains and Distributers of my Mercy and Grace.

It is not therefore of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that shews Mercy (ver. 16.). To will is good, to run and do is good, when they are used as good Means, and not fancied to be the End, nor pretended that by Virtue of and Adhesion to these Things we are in a State well pleasing to God, otherwise they are a Hindrance. What must make us acceptable to God; and make us Light in the Lord, must come from God himself into us by Faith. Our Acts of willing this, of practising t'other, of being of such a Religion, and exercising the Functions of it, of running to Sacraments, do not of themselves make us pleasing to God: 'tis mere Blindness and Cheating themselves for Men to flatter themselves with these Advantages and Works, unless they deny themselves and throw themselves humbly and purely into the Abyss of God's pure Mercy on which all depends.

Even in
the very
best of Men,
and in
Conversion,
Non
est volens
neque
currentis,
sed
Dei misericordis.
How this
is.

This Truth is palpably manifest in such as are truly converted to God: for first, they are full of good Wills, they run, they act, they do all they can, and all they think proper and most effectual to their Conversion; and yet after all, they find they do not advance at all, and they seem even to go backwards; and God so permits it that they may know that his Grace which he designs to give them depends not upon their willing, or running. But all on a sudden when they think not of it, and have lost all Hopes of Success in their Endeavours, God pours upon them his Light and his Grace that changes them in an instant in such a Manner to which they contribute so little actively, that they come then plainly to understand the Meaning of this Truth, *That it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that shews Mercy.*

This

This is what they likewise experience after another Manner, who with all their *willing* and *running* are re-
jected of God, as *Eſau* was, though he *would* have had the Blessing of his Father, and though he *ran* and did all he possibly could as far as carnal Means would go, to the obtaining it: but neither his *willing* nor his *running* were pleasing to God, because of his Presumption and Pride. The same befel the *Israelites* who having a good *Will* and a Divine Zeal, and *running* to the Observance of the Law, and even after proselyting others to the Observance of it; yet, they not doing this in a Spirit of Humility and Resignation to the Mercy of God, but in a Spirit of Presumption and Self-adhesion; neither their *willing* nor their *running* made them acceptable to God: on the contrary, they fell so far into his Disfavour as not to be neglected by him, or rather not to be punished by him after the ordinary Manner wherein he punishes other Sinners and Unbelievers in the World, whom he punishes and leaves to perish in the common Way; but as for them one may say he brings them upon the Stage, exposes and preserves them in the Sight of the World to be the most remarkable Example of his Wrath and severe Vengeance.

The same thing happens in the Wicked.

(Ver. 17.) Nor is this any such extraordinary Thing with God; on the contrary, he uses thus to dispose of wicked Men, when they continue obstinately impenitent, and are resolved to follow their own corrupt Wills. In this Case Divine Providence orders them in a very singular Manner to manifest his Glory most signally in their Crimes and in their Punishments as we have seen above (a), and the Example of *Pharaoh* (a) Chap. 8. v. 20. speaks home to this Point; the Scripture teaching us that God *said* to him, that instead of leaving him to perish after the ordinary Way, or letting him alone in the common Rank of Sinners, he *would* raise him up to the eminent Rank of an hardened Sinner, and *preserve him alive* so long till he came to that Height of Wickedness as shou'd fit him for such a Vengeance as *should make God's Name be renowned through all the Earth*. In like Manner God preserves the Jews that were obstinately wicked to be a notable Example of his severe Justice, to make himself acknowledged through the

How the Will of God justly disposes of such wicked Men.

Pharaoh.

Chap. World for a God that loves our humble Resignation
 XVI. to his Grace, and so utter an Enemy to Presumption,
 Self-love and all carnal Adhesion to our own Ways, as
 to punish it in the Race of his dearest Friends after so
 distinguishing, severe and illustrious a Manner.

(Ver. 18.) Conclude we *then*, that God *has Compassion on whom he will* have Compassion, that is to say, on the humble in Spirit, and on such as are resigned to him; and that he gives up to their own *hardening those he thinks good* and just to forsake, viz. the presumptuous, and such as continue obstinate in their carnal and natural Adhesions.

(Ver. 19.) But some will say, if it be true that God will thus dispose of Unbelievers, of presumptuous and obstinate Sinners, and raise them up to be Examples that shall by his severe Usage of them make God's Name famous and known in the World, *why does he yet complain of them, since they cannot resist his Will*, by which he is resolved to use them thus?

The making of Vessels some to Honour, and some to Dishonour.

(Ver. 20, 21.) But O Man, thinkest thou right, *who art thou that thou shouldest find fault with God's Conduct?* Is he not wise and just to do justly and fitly what he does without incurring thy Censure or that of the Work he thus orders and manages. A Work can never justly strive with him that has given it its Form, as earthen Vessels do not contend with the Potter when of the same Lump he makes some for less and others for more honourable Uses. Why therefore shouldest it be thought strange that God shouldest do the same thing with the Jews, some of whom he receives into the Number of his Vessels of Honour and of his Children, and rejecting others of them keeps them alive in so shameful a Manner to be an Example of his Vengeance; though the one and the other are taken out of the same Lump and out of the same Stock of Abraham and Israel?

(Ver. 22.) But that which is taken out of the same Lump was not equally disposed with regard to God; one Part of it gave him just Reason of Complaint and of making thereof Instruments to manifest his just Severity upon. For one Piece of this Mass refusing to give it self up to him or his Call of Mercy, God, after having a long Time born with them in their Disobedience to his Divine Will, which desired their Conversion, and

and having justly found fault with their Rebellion, took out and made of this corrupt and rebellious Mass of *Israel*, which is obstinately resolved to continue and strengthen it self in its *Disposition* for Destruction, *Vessels* wherein to make known his Power, his Name and his *Justice* through all the World in an exemplary Manner. But the other Part of this Mass having forsaken its own Ways and Conduct, and resigned it self up to the Will of its Maker, God took thence and made of it *Vessels of Grace*, in them to make known the Riches of his Glory which he had prepared for them.

(Ver. 24, &c.) And they, this faithful part of the Mass of *Abraham* which is the Matter of the *Vessels* that God calls and makes to his Glory, are not Jews only that are born of *Abraham* naturally; but also such among the *Heathen* that resign themselves up to the Spirit of Faith and Humility of *Abraham* and *Jacob*. And all this God had foretold by the Prophets, by *Hosea*, and by *Isaiah*, and the fundamental Reason of this whole Procedure, is, because the Jews sought after *Righteousness* by the way of their own Works, which put them up with Pride and made them stumble against the Humility of *Jesus Christ*, who is a Rock of Offence to the Proud, and to all such as being full of themselves, find nothing more intolerable than the Word of our Saviour, Come unto me, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart.

C H A P. XVII.

Reflexions upon the Tenth and Eleventh Chapters, and on the rest of the Epistle to the Romans.

O we on with our Reflexions on the remaining part of this Epistle of our Apostle, as we shall have Occasion from the Propositions we have formed out of it as an Abridgment of the whole.

The Righteousness of ty'd to the Letter of the Law, nor to external Things, but to God is af- Jesus Christ, who is the inward Light, Voice and Word in fix'd to Je- the Hearts of all Men (a).

The Righteousness of ty'd to the Letter of the Law, nor to external Things, but to God is af- Jesus Christ, who is the inward Word, Voice and Light of all Hearts.

(a) Chap. 10. 4, 5, 18.

(b) Oec. before the Inc. Ch. 13. § 4.

True Righteousness is not attain'd by the Law.

Reflex. This Proposition contains the principal Matter of this Chapter, of which I have but little to say, and that only to shew the coherence of it, having explain'd all the rest elsewhere (b).

In the 1st, 2d, and 3d Verses, the Apostle repeats what he had said in the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 31st, 32d Verses of the Ninth Chapter. He says it was not purely out of Presumption, but partly too out of Ignorance that the Jews fell from the Righteousness of God, because *they knew it not*. They did not sufficiently take notice, that it was an Operation of God's pure Grace in a Soul that acknowledging that all it is, and all it can it self do, is corrupt, and can work nothing but Damnation, empties it self of it self, and gives it self, Spirit and Heart, wholly to God, and suffers the Spirit of God to work what he pleases in her, who must be the Principle and Worker of that Righteousness we are ever like to be Possessors of. Instead of doing thus, they continued full of themselves, and not knowing their their own Impotence, nor the damnable Corruption of their Nature, their Faculties, Understanding and Reason, of their Desires and Endeavours, of their own Ways, Thoughts and Wills; with all this Train of Accomplishments they set upon the Law of God (that commands and prescribes Righteousness)

endeavouring to know it and do it of themselves and by their own Activity, and that way that lik'd them best, without renouncing themselves and wholly resigning up themselves passively to God: And by this Means they properly *sought after a Righteousness of their own* making and Fashion; a Righteousness depending on their own corrupt Strength, which busies it self only about the Letter and Formalities of the Divine Revelations. And this was what hinder'd them from giving up themselves to the Righteousness which God only works inwardly and entirely by the Spirit of *Jesus Christ* in such Souls as resign themselves to him with Contempt and Abnegation of themselves and of their own polluted and sickly Powers.

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(Ver 4.) For *Jesus Christ*, when we thus partake of him, *is the fulfilling of the Law, and the End* at which it aim'd; who will make *righteous all those that receive him* into themselves, by resigning up themselves to him and to his Operations by true Faith. Whereas (ver. 5.) the *Righteousness* which Men would pretend to attain to by conforming to the Law, requires, besides the internal Rectitude, which can be wrought in us only by Faith (a), an exact Observance of all external Things and Formalities; till which is done it cannot be said that Righteousness comes by the way of the Law; seeing by neglecting any of them we have more Reason to fear the Curse of the Law, than hope for Righteousness by it.

(a) Rom.
3. 30.

But (ver. 6, 7, 8, and 9.) the pure *Righteousness of Faith* is so inward, so spiritual, and so little depending on any thing without, that it does not so much as require of us to behold *Jesus Christ* corporeally, whose Spirit is the Principle and Worker of it; nor that we see the external Means and Effects of it, and by carnal and sensible Experience know that this Righteousness subsists before God after Death, and makes us Heirs of Eternal Life. The Word of the Heart, which is the inward Word of Faith, and the Substance of what we preach and say, supplies all this, and is that which saves us.

For (v. 9.) if the Confession of *Jesus Christ* that is made by the Mouth be true, so that you have within you really and livingly what you say, and your Heart embrace by

Chap. an humble and resign'd *Faith* the Spirit, and the New
 XVII. and Holy Life of *Jesus Christ* rais'd from the Dead, so
 that he be risen and living by the Power of the Father in
 your Heart dead to Sin, and filled with *Faith*, you shall be
 sav'd.

For (ver. 10.) thus it is that we believe with the Heart unto
 Righteousness; thus we become Righteous by the inter-
 nal Faith and Word of the Heart; and 'tis thus we evi-
 dence and confess it outwardly by saving Words and
 Actions: whereas the outward Confession, which is
 but dead and Judaical, whether by Words or Ceremo-
 nies, not coming from a Heart in which the Spirit of
Jesus Christ lives and operates, is not sufficient to Sal-
 vation.

(Ver. 12, &c.) And it being God's Design to save all
 Men, Jews and Gentiles, he proposes to all without dis-
 ference of *Jew and Greek*, this same inward Righteous-
 ness, which he works by the Spirit of Faith in those
 that give up themselves to him and call upon him, who is
 Lord of all, and rich unto all, and will save all that call upon
 him. Which is what the Heathen might from the be-
 ginning very well have known and done, had they but
 given good heed to the general Voice of God, the sound
 whereof is gone into the Hearts of all the Men in the
 World. And the Jews instead of being offended at this,
 shou'd have expected it, seeing God forewarn'd them
 by *Moses* and *Isaiah* both of the Calling and Reception
 of the Gentiles, as well as of their own Rebellion,
 which they should have been afraid of.

The Reje- XII. Prop: The Israelites are not rejected of God absolute-
 tion of the ly and for ever; but when they shall submit to the Faith in
 Israelites Vacuity and Humility of Heart, God will receive them into
 is not abso- his Grace and Favour (a).

lute, but Reflex. As St. Paul has not hitherto thought of a ri-
 only on ged Predestination, so is it yet much easier to observe
 Condition that he thinks of no such Matter in the whole Ele-
 of their In- venth Chapter; and to think otherwise is to make of
 fidelity, this Chapter a Chaos of inexplicable Confusion. For
 which cea- if it be maintained that St. Paul does in it speak of Pre-
 sing, their destination, we shall but make our selves ridiculous in
 shall like- the Explication of the greater Part of the Chapter: for
 wise have Example, shall *Elias* complain to God (ver. 3.) of the
 an end. Israelites

(a) Chap. 11, v. 1. to the 25.

Israelites being all reprobated by him by an eternal Decree? Wou'd God have said to him that there were left Seven Thousand predestinated to Life Eternal? Shall the Reprobation of the Jews (ver. 11, 12.) be a Means of the Eternal Election of the Gentiles? and (ver. 15.) will a second Eternal Election of the Jews be a Means of another second Election of the Gentiles to Life?

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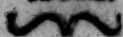
Were the Jews (ver. 17. &c.) cut off from an Eternal Election through their Unbelief as Branches from their natural Stock? and were the Gentiles eternally elected in consideration of their Faith? and shall they be cut off from this Election if they grow proud? and shall the Jews be again ingrafted into it if they continue not in their Unbelief? This is all unintelligible and contrary to their own Hypothesis. So that it must be confessed that the Apostle in all these Places speaks of the Calling and of the actual Admission of Men to be God's Children, and Righteous Heirs of his Goods and of his Grace. And if it be so, how can Men bring into this Discourse of St. Paul's the Matter of absolute Predestination, which they seek after in the 5th. 6th. 7th. and 28th. Verses to the End of the Chapter? I confess I cannot take the Apostle for one that shou'd make so odd a Discourse, so interrupted and broken with Things nothing to the Purpose, and indeed quite opposite to one another. Leave we then these Absurdities, unworthy the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and let us say a Word or two concerning the Thread of the Apostle's Discourse,

We have observed already in the Reflexions on the Sixth proposition, and likewise elsewhere (a), that agreeably to what the Apostle says (b) Abraham was elected not only to be one single righteous Person, but to be by Means of his Race the Father of the Faithful, the Means and Channel through which the Righteousness of God shou'd be shed forth upon all the World. This is what God told and promised him. That is to say, that God to make good his Promise will make choice of Abraham and his Race as well in Quality of single righteous Persons. as of Instruments to communicate through them his Righteousness to others.

God keeps
his Promise
to Abra-
ham with
regard to
the People
whom he
foreknew.

(a) Oec.
of the
Restor.
before
But the Inc.

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But we have seen how Matters went with the Jews, *Has God therefore* disannul'd his Promise of Election, and *has he cast off the People* which he had promised to chuse to be themselves righteous, and to be the Seminary and Root of righteous Persons?

The Apostle (ver. 1.) says he has *no*. And proves it many Ways.

First, By the Example of himself, who was chosen and actually receiv'd of God to be made and declar'd Righteous, and to be employ'd as an Instrument to spread his Righteousness through the World.

Secondly, He says expressly, that *the People which God foreknew*, that is to say, the People of whom God according to his Pleasure form'd the Idea and Character, the Conditions and Dispositions, and such Qualifications as he lik'd best to fit 'em to be receiv'd unto his Righteousness, this People *is not* nor ever can be *cast away*. God cannot dislike any one of them that shall answer this Idea and these Qualities foreknown of him.

In the *third* Place, he proves, by what happen'd in the Days of *Elias*, that in all Times, (ver. 5.) *the Grace* of God promis'd to *Abraham* and to his Race, I say the Grace promis'd (and *not Works*, ver. 6.) hath chosen and *elected some of those that were left* and not carried away by the Torrent of Presumption and Unbelief, and that all the others wou'd have been chosen too had they but submitted to and acquir'd such Dispositions as God's Election requires in all he admits to Righteousness and Adoption. But that the *Israelites having sought* this Righteousness (ver. 7.) and this Adoption of God by their own Will, Works and Strength (Ch. 9. 32.) *did not obtain it*. The pretended Election they fancy'd God wou'd make of them, to rank them among his Righteous Children by virtue of their own presumptuous Activity, signify'd and got nothing: but *the Election* which God was pleas'd to make of such as were humble and obedient to his Grace by Faith, this Election *did obtain*, stood and was ratified in all those it found to its Mind, and *the rest were left* in their presumptuous, corrupt and miserable State, in which they *hardn'd themselves more and more*.

(Ver.

(Ver. 8, 9, 10.) And this beset them with so much Justice, that we must say Amen, and consent, with the Spirit of God, to the Miseries that they have wilfully brought upon themselves, and to all the Evils into which this Divine Justice has left them to throw themselves, after their having refus'd God's Blessing and Grace. For thus we see, that the Spirit of God, that Spirit of Equity and Righteousness, does consent to all this by the Mouth of David and the Prophets.

(Ver. 11, &c. to the 25.) Yet is not the Jewish Nation so absolutely fallen, nor so rejected of God, as never to rise again, and as that God will never chuse any of their Race more to be his People, and his Righteous Sons. Their Unbelief and their Presumption is the Reason of their Rejection, as it will be of the Gentiles if they fall into it. But if the Jews do not continue in their Unbelief God will chuse them and take them in again for his People and will ingraft them as a Branch of a Tree upon the chosen Stock of Abraham, whence they were cut off; and this the rather, because they are already Branches of this Stock which God blessed and sanctified both in it self and in what grew of it, and out of which he has already taken so many Holy Branches, which are as so many Holy First-fruits of what the whole Mass shall one Day be. This is clearly what the Apostle would inculcate all along to the 26th Verse, and is the Matter of our Twelfth Proposition. Come we now to the following Proposition.

XIII. Prop. It shall one Day really come to pass that all the Nation of the Israelites shall be converted to the Righteousness of God by the Coming of Jesus Christ; God having chosen their Fathers to be himself glorified by their Posterity.

Reflex. The Apostle lays down and proves this Truth many Ways.

First, (ver. 25.) He declares that the hardening of Israel is but in part, or for a time only; and that it shall last but till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, that is to say, (and this Interpretation seems to me preferable to all others) till the time that all the Nations of the World are to be converted to God. 'Tis well known that above Three Quarters of the World is at present perfectly Heathen; and the Scripture will not

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Men are chosen or cast off according as they qualify themselves.

The future Conversion and Re-summption of the Jews.

let

Chap. XVII. let us question but all the Nations and People of the Earth will one Day be converted and obedient to the Lord. *Isaiab* and the *Psalms* are fill'd with this Truth. Now when this Time shall be at hand and just-a coming, when the Nations shall be upon the point of entering into the Church of the Saints, then will the Hardness and Blindness of *Israel* be ended: then shall they be converted and be employ'd as Instruments to convert and bring in the Heathen. For, to use the Apostles Words, for if the Fall of the Jews has prov'd a Means to enrich the Gentiles spiritually, and if their Fall and lessening has been the enriching of the Gentiles, how much more shall their Fulness be the Riches and the Abundance of the World and of the Nations? And that their Rejection has serv'd to reconcile the World, what will their Reception be but a Resurrection and Renovation of Life to all the World, hitherto plung'd in the Darkness of Death?

Secondly, The Apostle proves the same Truth (ver. 26, 27.) by the Oracles of the Prophets *Isaiab* and *Jeremias*, and thence concludes, that all the Nation of *Israel* shall one Day be delivered and saved.

In the third Place he proves it (ver. 28, 29.) from the Nature of the Gifts and Calling of God, which are such as God does not repent of or retract. Now so it is, that God had called their Fathers and had promised and given them the Privilege of being employed, themselves and their Race, by him as Instruments to convey his Blessing to the rest of the World (a). Therefore God will never repent of this, nor retract it: and so the Jews shall yet become just and holy themselves, and shall derive Holiness and Blessing upon all the World.

(a) Rom. 4. 13.
Gen. 22. 18.

'Tis true (ver. 28.) at present they are Enemies of the Truth as to the Gospel, and they are the more irreconcilably so, because ye Gentiles, whom they hate, have embraced it. But still this Nation is look'd upon by God with an Eye of Love and Benevolence, because of the Choice and Election which he has made of their Fathers to be by them and their Race glorified through the World. See here plainly the Recalling of the Jews of which I have elsewhere spoken more than once (b).

(b) Occ. of the Restor. before

the Inc. Ch. 15. § 8. & 10. Occ. after the Inc. Ch. 10. § 20.

The

The Apostle to set before us God's wonderful Conduct in all these Matters, shews, that his Divine Providence so interposed and guided their great and manifold Wickednesses and Rebellions as to make the Evil of some instrumental and occasional to the Good of others, and that to the abundant and universal Good: for (ver. 30.) the Jews having become rebellious, were the Occasion of the Calling of and of Grace to the Gentiles, that were before Infidels: and the Jews being at present rebellious occasionally from the Grace that is shewn to the Gentiles, these very Rebels shall be received into Grace upon account of that Mercy that God shall one day pour upon all the Gentiles throughout the whole World: 'tis plain the Apostle's Sense is thus to be fill'd up, and the Greek if well considered evidently points that Way.

For (ver. 32.) *God has shut up all in Disobedience, that he might shew Mercy to all.* This is the Conclusion of this, and of the Eleven first Chapters of this Divine Epistle; and it is the principal Thing he all along intended to remark to us. The Meaning whereof with reference to this Verse is in short this.

All Men having sinned, lost the Glory, the Righteousness and Light of God, are nothing but Abominations, Unrighteousness and Darkness while left to themselves. God designed to deliver them all by means of his Divine Light and Righteousness which he offered inwardly to the Heathen by the Dictates of their Conscience, and outwardly to the Jews by the mighty Advantages of Revelation. The Heathen instead of receiving this Divine Light in an humble and grateful Heart, which wou'd have prepared the Way for the Operation of the Divine justifying Grace, ungratefully contemned it, and wilfully quenched it; and from a Spirit of Presumption betook themselves to the Activity of their humane Reason and of their Imagination, pretending this Way to become wise. But see what God by his Providence did upon this. They being obstinate in their Presumption and Self adhesion, and through the Blindness of their Mind taking this Practice of theirs for Vertues, which are in the Sight of God abominable Vices, God resolved to permit this wilful and obstinate Source of the Corruption of their Heart

St. Paul's
main Conclusion.

God's dealing with the Heathen.

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to break out into a thousand Kinds of Sins so gross, that it wou'd thereby evidently appear that these miserable Wretches were so far from being wise, that they were rebellious and disobedient to the most palpable Lights of Nature as well as of God. Now they being once convinc'd of their Wickedness and Rebellion in the Face of all Creatures, which was before lurking in their Hearts, and to them unseen, but was by God designedly suffered to flow out and shew it self that they might no longer mistake it, they wou'd be of use to them for the future to keep them in Humility whenever God shou'd be pleased to present his justifying Grace to them: for then they wou'd no longer apply themselves to their Reason and their corrupt Faculties as pretending this Grace promised and offered them was actually to be applied and given them by Virtue and in Consideration of their own Activity and Conduct. The Remembrance of their former Rebellion and Disobedience which were the Fruits of their Presumption and of their Reason and corrupt Faculties, will make them submit their Necks, and for the Time to come quit themselves, and their own Prudence and Guidance, to cast themselves without Reserve with an entire Abnegation and Forsaking of themselves into the Arms of God's Grace, looking no more for Light or good Motions, for Purification, Righteousness or Direction but from his pure Mercy. Thus has the Providence of God concluded that the corrupt Heathen shou'd make their Corruption appear outwardly, to the end that this might serve as a Means to make them capable of God's Mercy, and that this Divine Mercy of his might be the more gratefully received and acknowledged.

God's dealing with
the Jews.

In like manner, the Jews instead of embracing by Faith the Righteousness of God to which the Law led them, shut their Eyes against the Divine Light of Faith, which inwardly called them to the Word of God and which indeed was that Word, and adhered to themselves and to their own Works through Presumption and Pride: whence it came to pass that by not seeing and acknowledging their own Corruption and Impotence, they made use of all the Faculties of their corrupt Nature and its Activity, and that obstinately
and

and resolvedly to practice outwardly and after their own Way the Law of God, thinking that because of this fine Work of their own Endeavours, God was obliged to give them his Righteousness; not knowing that their natural Corruption was so great as not to be able to think, nor speak, nor do of it self so much as one good Act (a). A Presumption this that is incompatible with the Gift of Righteousness which God works in the Soul only by the pure Motions of his Grace and good Spirit. Now what did God upon this *Relagian* Willfulness of the Jews? He concluded to suffer this Indisposition and Corruption of their Hearts, and the Impotence of their fancied Strength to appear openly and outwardly, by gross Sins and palpable Disobedience. So this Corruption hidden and unknown to them through their Blindness appeared and broke out by their Revolt against the Son of God, whom with his Followers they slew even when they came to offer them the Grace of God. This Rebellion against Grace it self, will put them, when they come to themselves and know what they have done, into a State and Disposition to receive God's Grace and Mercy after so pure a Manner, that they will never fall from it more; nor consult any more their own Reason, nor the Scripture with it, nor their own Motions, nor good Pleasure, though they think it nothing but Divine Zeal, nor lastly any thing that comes from themselves; for they will then see that all this heretofore produced nothing but Rebellion and the Rejection of God's Grace; but will resign up themselves in perfect Humility and without Reserve, Heart, Mind, Reason, Conduct and every Thing to the Light, Motions, Guidance, Grace and Mercy of the Holy Spirit, who will govern them absolutely and lead them to Righteousness and to Eternal Life. Thus we see how God concluded to suffer the inward Corruption of the Jews to appear and shew it self by an open and manifest Rebellion, that even this gross Disobedience of theirs might serve as a Means to dispose and fit them for the Mercy of God.

Thus it is that God concluded to suffer them all, Jews and Gentiles, to fall into palpable and notorious Rebellion, that by these Preparatives he might have Mercy upon all.

(Ver.

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(a) Rom.
3. 11, 19.

The Judgments of God how incomprehensible.

(Ver. 33.) *O the Depths of the Riches, and of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! O my God, how infinite are the Riches of thy Goodness, thus to have Mercy on all Mankind, Jews and Gentiles, after so many criminal and wilful Falls and Rebellions! How wonderful is thy Wisdom, to make their very Rebellion a Means to the Disposition, to the Receiving and to the Confirming of them in thy Mercy, and to make the Enmity of Jews and Gentiles turn to their Re-union, and to their eternally loving each other! How penetrating and vast is thy Knowledge, that thus foresaw and ordered Things thus to the End of the World! O how unsearchable to the natural and corrupt Man and to all his Reasonings and Conjectures are the Judgments of God! How are his Ways and the Conduct of his Providence in the Manner of his Disposing of good and wicked Men, hard and impossible to be found out by the humane Wit of the Wise and the Understanding of the Doctors of the Law, of the Rabbins and Philosophers! For who hath known the Mind of the Lord! What Man, O Lord, cou'd ever have imagined or thought that thou would'st thus have managed and ordered the Jews and Gentiles, and the wicked Rebellions of them both, and that thou would'st thus draw Good out of them; and that so universal an one and for all the World? Who is he, O Lord, that cou'd give thee such wonderful Counsel? Or who is he that cou'd prevent God in Counsel, in Design and in Wisdom and Love, and he shall be repayed and recompenced as he deserves! None surely cou'd contribute any thing to all this; and the Wit of Doctors, wise Men and Philosophers with all their liberal and rational Learning were utterly in the Dark, and so are still as to this grand Design of God. It is God's Spirit alone that projects, executes, and declares all this; for of him, and through him, and for him are all things: to whom be Glory for ever. Amen.*

The Abuse that is commonly made of this Exclamation of St. Paul.

Thus, in my Opinion is the Doctrine of Election and Reprobation sufficiently cleared, and St. Paul's Sense of these Matters made plain and easy. Only let us observe (and 'tis likely I have made this Remark elsewhere) with how little Reason Men make use of this Exclamation of St. Paul, *O the Depths of the Riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!* as a Pretence to cover

cover and defend the grossest Absurdities of Mens own framing, because they are indeed *incomprehensible* to common Sense. Really a pretty Device this! Men frame Systems and Notions that are nothing but mere Difficulties harsh and hard, Precipices and Repugnances to all our Conceptions Divine and Human, to common Sense and Conscience; and then to maintain these inexplicable Fancies of their own they cry out, *O the Depths of the Riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* instead of crying out when they put such Whimsies upon the World, *O the Depth of the Poverty, of the Folly and Ignorance of Human Understanding, how ridiculous are the Dotages and Judgments it makes, and how chimerical and contradictory are its Ways! How far is the natural and carnal Man from comprehending the Things of God's Spirit, that cannot be comprehended but by the Spirit and Grace of God! How true is all this! And how little do Men know, and how unwilling are they to know what this means!*

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But to any one that possesses God's Spirit, or even to any that has but some small Ray of his most holy Grace: the Ways of God are not only not incomprehensible nor impossible or hard to find out, but are Straitness, Light, and Easiness it self. For (a) the Spirit of God searches all things, even the Depths of God; and (b) he teaches us all things. And this is what I have treated of at large elsewhere; and so shall here pass it over and go on with the rest of my Reflexions on the Propositions that contain the Sum of this Epistle.

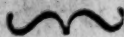
God's Ways are not incomprehensible to such as are united to God's Spirit.
(a) 1 Cor. 1. 2, 10.
(b) 1 John 2. 27.

XIV. Prop. Serve God no longer after the Jewish Way, but let your Worship be spiritual and true, consisting in a Life holy and consecrated to God (c).

Spiritual Worship.

Reflex. There were the first Fruits of this holy Worship in the Church of Jerusalem, as I have elsewhere noted; but it will be perfectly accomplished in the New Jerusalem wherein St. John (d) saw no more any material Temple. In the Church which God will renew upon Earth, he shall be served purely, in Spirit and in Truth without any more Ceremonies and Figures. And 'tis what I have observed elsewhere (e). The Christian Church is decayed and fallen for not having kept to

(c) Ch. 12.
(d) Apoc. 21. 22.
(e) Oec. before the Inc. Chap. 18. this. § 7, &c.

- Chap. XVII.  this. Men would needs return to the old Jewish Mode of Serving God, in the Spirit of the Scribes, Doctors and Rabbins of Pride and Presumption; and with a mere Jewish Zeal grounded themselves on and stick to the Letter of the Scripture, to their Ceremonies, and the accomplishments of their Heathenish Learning, and not on the Interiour of an humble and divine Heart, guided by the Motions and Spirit of God. This goes now a days for Enthusiasm. *Yet the hand of the Lord is not shortened, nor does his Vertue fail: but it is your Sins that have made a Separation between you and your God (a).*
- (a) Isa 69. v 1, 2. & 50. v. 2. The XV. Prop. relates to the Practice of Christian Vertues recomended by St. Paul. These Exhortations of the Apostle and all his other are grounded upon this Principle, that the Just, as long as they are in this World being encompassed with many Enemies, the Flesh, the Devil, and the World, and weak Believers; unless they take great Care may fall from their Righteousness and perish; as I have shewn in the proper Place (b). And therefore the Apostle's Charity warns them to be upon their Guard against whatever may happen, and to behave themselves circumspectly at all Times, and with all Sorts of Men and Circumstances. In the 1st Verse he shews them how to behave themselves toward God; in the 3d and following Verses, how to carry themselves towards their Neighbours of all Sorts and upon all Occasions; on all which I intend not to insist, having in divers Places already handled those Matters, as for Example, Submission to the higher Powers, in the Ninth Chapter of this Treatise, (the Sixteenth Proposition) Justice, Charity and the meek and peaceable Methods of dealing with weak and well meaning Persons of different Opinions; the Practice whereof I have endeavoured to shew in my Explication of the Eucharist (c). And, (agreeably to the Nineteenth Proposition) as St. Paul writ both to Jews and Gentiles freely and to further their Salvation, so have I endeavoured to write for the Sake of some who greatly desire Reasonings, and that with great Freedom and open Heartedness. I pray God turn all to Good. Amen.
- (b) Oec. after 7e-
sus Christ,
Chap. 6, 7.
- (c) Oec.

C H A P. XVIII.

Advertisement concerning the Universality of Grace propos'd in this System: that it no ways favours Self-Love, as the System of the Pelagians does. Self-Love the direct Object of Reprobation. The Conclusion of this Work.

I.



OBSERV'D a little before (a) that some seem'd to suspect the Doctrine of universal Grace, or of God's willing the Salvation of all Men, as favouring Self-love. Though this Objection destroys it self, and though it be a Con-

tradiction to pretend that Doctrine favours Self-love which teaches that God designs to bring back all Men to the pure Love of himself, which is Life Eternal, and that he supplies them with Means to that End, and among others with the rough and terrible one of Purification, which is the very Death of Self-Love; yet it must be confess'd there are those that propose, believe and embrace such a kind of universal Grace, or such a Will in God to save all Men, that do it out of pure Self-love.

II. Such is the whole System and Divinity of the Pelagians, and of all those that are of their Opinions. 'Tis merely a System of Self love, and a Divinity of the Old Adam, who is exceeding skillful in procuring himself Rest, Ease and Content. These Men intend not to be saved by the way of Humility, Self-abasement and Abnegation, of inward and outward Mortification, of the painful and dreadful Purification which the internal Grace of God works in us to kill the very Root of our Old Man, by a living Conformity to the Death of Jesus Christ. No, no, they mean no such thing: Self-love, Esteem and Satisfaction, Self-approbation, Pleasure, Delight, Quiet, Joy, Contentments and Con-

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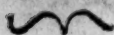
veniences,

I. This System no way abets Self-love.

(a) Chap. 13. § 8.

II. The Theological System of the Pelagian Universality and Moderation, is a pure System of Self-love:

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veniencies, these must all be preserv'd; but especially and above all a Reason and Faith of Persuasion and Imagination that will be sure to follow, as best suits them, only such Means and such Ways of Salvation as they shall think convenient; and then comes a jolly Salvation, and an infallible Coronation of this Old Adam, that has all this while been so tenderly preserved.

We do not consider this as we ought. The whole System of Pelagian Divinity, their God, their universal Grace, their Faith of Reason and Imagination, their Morality, their Vertues, their Doctrine of Moderation, Forbearance, and Condescension, and of Peace, tends all but to the maintaining and preserving in Honour, in Quiet and Content the Old Adam, and that Love every one has for himself, which makes us very willing to procure our selves Peace, Rest and Satisfaction both in this World and in the World to come.

This is the subtlest and most deadly Poison that ever the Devil or Pharisaism infected the World with, nor is it possible to preserve our selves from it (for we are all from our very Birth tainted with it) any other way but by Humility, Self denial and Crucifixion, and that Purification which I have elsewhere explain'd at large.

III. The
true Uni-
versality
of Grace is
consistent
with the
absolute
Reprobati-
on of Self-
love.

III. Things being thus, I need not fear any will suspect the Universality of Grace, as it is by me propos'd, favours Man's corrupt and Self-love. Whoever shall read the Treatise of the Co-operation of Man, will soon be of another Mind; and indeed what I have said of the Substance of the Epistle to the *Romans*, or of one part of it is enough to prevent all Misprision in this Matter.

What I have said concerning the Reprobation of *Ishmael* and *Esau*, that is, of the carnal presumptuous Spirit of Man, full of and fasten'd to the Esteem of himself, of his Reason and Activity, of his own Works, whether seemingly divine or visibly corrupt ones, is of it self enough to clear me from such Suspicions. I have shewn there that this was the Spirit and Temper reprobated of God and destin'd to Eternal Death, and never to be receiv'd into Favour and Life. For God never will have any Friendship or Communion with such a
Temper,

Temper, and it must necessarily be destroy'd, as that which is *the Son of Perdition*. So that whoever is of it and intends to be saved, must of Necessity kill and destroy it in himself whilst he is in this Life: if he does not, but be at his Death taken in it and cloath'd with it, they must both the Man and his Corruption, or his *Spirit of Ishmael and Esau*, be reprobated of God and cast into Eternal Death.

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IV. And therefore the Universality of God's Grace does not in the least flatter this wicked Spirit; for God does neither offer nor give his Grace to Men simply and absolutely. There are in Man two Things; the one is, his Soul created of God for Eternal Life; the other is his Corruption or his Self-love, introduced by the Devil and Sin for Eternal Death. Now God does joyntly present two other things to these two that are in Man: to his Soul created by him he presents Grace and Life; to Self-love or that Corruption which came from the Devil he presents the Cross, Death and Extermination. And it is impossible to change the Order and Habitude of these things; that is to say, to present Life and Grace to the Self-love and Corruption of the Old *Adam*, and to present Death to the Soul, as they wou'd have it that hold absolute Reprobation. So likewise it is impossible to embrace one of these things without the other, Life and Grace without the Cross and Death: because the one is the Introduction of and a Condition necessarily annex to the other, it being impossible what is Good should live in the Soul but upon the Death of what is Evil; or that Light shou'd enlighten and yet the Hindrances to it and the Darkness not be dispell'd. And thus is Grace presented universally to every Soul on Condition that to clear herself of the Corruption that cleaves to her, she present to it the Cross and Death, and resign up to God all her Powers and her Liberty for God to produce and manifest in her his Divine Life, and all the Operations of his most Holy Grace just in such manner as he shall think best. And now I have ended my Work: Reader, farewell, and God grant it may be of Use to your Salvation!

IV. The offer of Life to every Soul, and the offer of the Cross and Death to our Corruption and to our Self-love are inseparable.

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V. I have been long enough speaking to Men. I have long desir'd to make an end, and return to Thee, O my God ; from whom I did not think I should have been so long distracted when I first began to write, intending only Ten or a Dozen Sheets on the Subject of thy Grace: but I know not what inconsiderate Desire of profiting others, and letting them see thy Divine and saving Truth, has insensible carried me to make so long a Work ; which I should not have undertaken had I foreseen the Length of it : seeing I not only had not then the greatest part of that Knowledge which came into my Mind as I was writing ; but because, though I had then known all I now do, I shou'd have staid till they were livingly and strongly realiz'd in my self before I offer'd to others these Truths, if I intended they should reap any Benefit by them. But likewise as thy infinite Goodness often rewards the Good will as if the thing had really been done, so I beseech Thee (and that is all the Reward I crave) by this Work, such as it is, to promote thy own adorable Glory and the Salvation of my Neighbours no more nor no less than thou wou'dst have done had I writ it in the perfectest Disposition of Soul I cou'd have wish'd my self able to have done it in. I trust my Good-will and Intention will not be displeasing to Thee, and that thy Goodness has at least led my Mind and Will into the ideal Truth of things which I have desir'd others might know to thy Glory, that from this ideal Knowledge both they and I may breath after the real Possession of the things themselves which thy Grace alone can give to such as resign themselves up to Thee, and leave both their Errors and their own most elaborate Conceptions, and all the Activity of their Spirit and their Reason by a perfect Rest and Quiet to give way to thy sacred inward Operations.

I desire to give up my self to Thee in Vacuity and Silence that thou mayest for the future work in me that which is pleasing in thy sight. Receive my Soul into thy Holy Rest, and deliver me from the imperfect and indeed wholly corrupt Activity of my Mind and of my humane Reason, from the Spring of my Ideas of my barren and superficial Speculations, and from all the miserable Labour of the Sons of *Adam*, which, like that of *Egypt* does but double our Servitude, and estrange

us from the true Liberty of the Operations of thy Holy Spirit. Take away all my Speculations, and give me instead of them one Drop of thy pure Love. Thou knowest I wou'd willingly make such an Exchange. Do thou make it in me and in all those I may have given occasion to fill their Heads with Ideas and Speculations, and to be too intent upon them. Make us all the Scholars of Faith and of Love, that so we may be fitted to receive from thy Holy Spirit the *things which cannot enter into the Mind of Man, and which thou reservest for those that love Thee.*

Why, O my God, do we think of any thing else but of loving thee and of making Way for thy Love, since for thy part thou thinkest of nothing but of testifying to us and giving us the eternal Effects of this thy infinite Love, and since this Love is the Great Master that teaches all things solidly! Why think we on any other thing but of emptying our selves of our selves of our Activity and our Filth, seeing thou standest all ready to fill us with thy Grace and with thy saving Goods? 'Tis the Enemy of our Salvation that thus blinds us, and holds us captive under his Will that he may destroy us eternally; for he knows we are born his Slaves and in a State of Damnation; and that thy most holy Grace and thy Divine Operations are the only Things that can redeem us out of it; and that all that proceeds from us and is of our own natural Production is opposite to, and incompatible with thy holy Operations; and that we have but this Life time to chuse our Party, either to continue in the natural and damnable State of our own Labour and Travail, or to surrender our selves to thee and to thy Operations by resting from our selves: and so this Enemy of our Souls endeavours to make us pass and employ this precious Time of our Life on something else, that at Death finding our Souls void of thee. of thy Grace and of the Divine Operations of thy Holy Spirit, he may irrecoverably carry them away with him into his infernal Kingdom, to which all belong that have not in them the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, but that of corrupt Reason and of the Wisdom of this World. And therefore it is that this accursed Spirit makes us spend our Time in busying our selves about our selves, and in thinking of a

Chap. XVIII.  Thousand Trifles, Vanities, and Fooleries, such as are those that the Learned very seriously busie their Minds with, their idle Sciences and fruitless Curiosities, not imagining all the while that they are in Death, and they thereby lose the Time of re-entering into Life Eternal. And, O my God, do they thus lose thee for so little a Thing! The little I know of it is enough to make me understand and say, that the Whole is but a little Matter, and indeed only a great deal of Trash and Dung; and I have but too sadly experienced that by it one is estrang'd from and loses thee. Suffer me no more, if it be thy Pleasure, to return to those Studies again and lose thee. And since thou knowest thine own Worth, for that Love and Esteem thou hast for thy self suffer me not to be so great a Loser. Assist me to find and enjoy thee; for of my self I cannot do it. I cannot make thee to be born in me; and my corrupt Faculties with all their Efforts, can only cause barren Ideas to arise in my Mind, and sometimes only mere Fantoms, that drive thee away and hinder thy Work in me. None of our Speculations are the bright and real Truth, nor do they set us so much as one Step forward towards thee, O my God, till we sit still and wait for thy Salvation in this only Desire that thou wouldest come and work in us. How rare and unbeaten a Way is this, and how is it despised by the Learned and look'd on as Folly and Enthusiasm, they like Fools and senseless People speaking Ill of Things Divine they understand not, while they make themselves Slaves to that itching and restless Harlot of their own corrupt Reason, in which and in the Fruits of their Harlotry with her they place their chief Delight, as in Pride, Eicceness, Dissentions. Disputes, Factions. Hatred, and especially the foolish and deplorable Presumption of being by this Means some mighty Thing, of being truely enlightened Persons, and even sometimes of embracing the pure and chaste Eternal Wisdom, when indeed they clasp only a Strumpet, or the empty Cloud in the Fable, whence spring the vainest and foolishhest Monsters and Fictions imaginable.

Put down, O Lord, put down this grand Idolatry of human Reason which Men in our Days set up as God, and prefer before Divine Faith and before Vacu-
ity

ity and Simplicity of Heart. Destroy its Empire, and so clearly discover its Weakness, its Folly and Extravagancies in such as idolize it, that both they and others perceiving the Doting and chimerical Fooleries they build upon it, may leave it and give up themselves to that saving Vacuity which Faith exacts.

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*Let all vain Gods confounded be,
And Fools that to them bow their Knee!*

Psal. 97. 7.

But may it be by such a Confusion as may promote their Salvation, and of Adorers of this Great and lunatick *Diana of the Ephesians* make them by a new Birth *Worshippers of the Father in Spirit and in Truth*. Extirpate also this other Jewish and pernicious Idol the mortal Heresy of Pelagianism, which flatly denying both the Disease and the Physician, the Medicine and the Cure of the natural and corrupt Man, throws him into an enevitable Necessity of perishing eternally. This Poison of Hell, strong enough to damn a thousand Worlds, is in our Days endeavouring to insinuate and spread it self everywhere, in some openly and grossly, in others after a more sly and subtile Manner. Some frankly confess they acknowledge neither the Miseries, nor the Blindness, nor the State of Damnation we are sunk into, nor the Operations of thy Spirit of Grace, nor the Folly Men commit in applying themselves out of a blind Zeal and with their perverted Reason to the Steril Ideas of the Letter and History of the Scripture, and to some external Practices, by which they imagine they become pleasing to thee, and enter into Life; and others without perceiving it give way to a Pelagianism more refined but not less destructive, that possesses almost all Men, by the secret Esteem they have of themselves and of their Advantages, by the Confidence they have in their own Understanding, Addresses, and Conduct, and in every thing which concerns themselves, and through the brutal Ignorance of thy good Pleasure, which is to take thy Delight with the Sons of Men, by communicating to them the Lights and lively Motions of thy Holy Spirit, and by his Divine Commerce and Communion with pure Souls. This is what these Ignorants universally

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fally decry as Enthusiasm, while at the very same Time they have the pitiabie Presumption to say, they themselves have the Holy Spirit and his Operations, seeing themselves reduc'd to the Necessity of either acknowledging themselves not to belong to *Jesus Christ*, nor to be his Members, or to own the same Truth in Substance, yet still taking, through a much-to-be-pitied Presumption, the dry Ideas, the Works and Illusions of their own Imaginations, and their dead Faith, for the Holy Spirit, and for his Operations and Guidance. Dispel, O Lord, these Delusions, and by the Strokes of thy Divine Light make Men comprehend the Greatness of their Misery and of their Impotence, the prodigious Distance they are from thee, the Vanity and Folly of all the carnal Imaginations and Practices they flatter themselves with; how heavenly and pure the Operations of thy Holy Spirit, which alone can make us pleasing to thee and save us, are; and how much they are beyond all Jewish Advantages we please our selves in, and like them, make our boasts of; whil't we are all the while really destitute of the only true Reason and Ground of glorying in God, the Inhabitation and our Possession of thy adorable Spirit.

Since the only End why thou createdst us was to be thy Temples, that thou mightest come and dwell and act and take thy delight in us, and we in thee; suffer not therefore, O my God, this End of all we are and have, this one only necessary Thing, to be any longer thus forgotten of some, nor despis'd and held impossible by others, nor in Effect be by all rejected as it is. Once more shew and make it manifest at least to Men of Good will and to such as wait on Thee, that thou art no dead, inactive, or changeable God, that thou hast not said and promis'd great things to make good little or nothing. This is a Truth thou hast convinc'd me of by the living Experience and by the great Torch of Divine Light which thou hast in our Days held out in a Holy Soul which thou hadst made the Sacred Temple of thy Holy Spirit, and I shall ever bless and praise Thee for bringing me into her Acquaintance, who was the first that open'd my Eyes and set my Heart on seeking Thee in good earnest. (a)

(a) Isa.
66. 5.

The Wicked that hate the Good, that cast them out for thy Name

Name *fake*, as vile and despicable, have insultingly and scornfully said, *What, will the Lord thus be glorified!* Even so Lord, let thy Glory be thus known and manifested by those that are little, single and low of Heart: Let thy Glory and thy fullest Praise be establish'd, as thou hast said (a) on the Mouth of Babes, and of those that wou'd willingly submit to suck the Breast, to humble the proud Enemies, to the great Joy of the Good, and to the Confusion of the Wicked, and of the Proud, fierce and haughty Hearts of the Learned Fools of the Age, and of all such as admire them: or rather if possible to the Conversion and saving of them all: for there are many that insult God when they intend nothing less, so great is the Darkness of their Hearts. (a) Ps. 8.3.

But when thou makest thy Instruments speak outwardly to the Blind, thou must, if it please Thee, O Divine Light, that hast more Strength and Penetration than the thickest and most central Darkness of our Hearts, enlighten us inwardly and give us a lively Knowledge of Truth and Falshood, of Good and Ill as it is before Thee: and *thy Truth shall make us free*. Thou must, O Humility of our Saviour, more powerful and central than the most rooted Pride of our Hearts, when thou sendest any to speak to our Pride, pierce us, and mortifie in us the sottish Esteem and Complacence we have in our selves, and the grand Idolatry of our own Understanding, of our own Reason and Will, and of all we do, though in thy Sight it be mere Dung and Filth. O Divine Eternity, reduce us from that Dispersion we are in among temporal and transitory Objects, and recollect us into the quiet and still Centre of our Hearts, there to give way and Attention to the omnipotent and ineffable Operations of thy Manifestation, one Moment whereof is preferable to Ages of Duration: But especially, O Divine Love, infinite and incomprehensible Love, that art greater than all the Malice of Men and Devils, swallow up and annihilate in thy self our Self-love, and make us Lovers of such a God as loves us so well as not to care (it shou'd seem) to be God but for our good. 'Tis thou, O Love Divine, that art the most misunderstood, the most blasphেম'd, injur'd and abus'd of all things, tho' thou art of all things the most evident and the most universal.

Men

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Men have confin'd, disfigur'd and chang'd Thee into Hatred and Malevolence, into a Will to damn, or leave to be damn'd purely out of Humour the greatest part of Mankind, which thou mightest, hadst thou pleas'd, have sav'd from Eternal Death. Nor will they have Thee now to seek the Salvation of all Men by all sorts of Means; and teach that thou willest the perishing of the greatest part of them without affording them either inwardly or outwardly the Means of Salvation, which they say thou hast from all Eternity decreed never to give them.

O Divine Love, those that speak thus never knew thee aright, nor have they seen with an Eye purely enlighten'd by Faith, how thou seekest the Hearts of thine Enemies, and how thou dost encompass them and wait all Opportunities to pierce them with thy Darts, and fill them with thy Flame when they never so little open them to Thee and quit their mortal Employments. For thou standest at the Door of their Hearts and knockest, and if any will but forsake his Distractions and hearken to the Voice of Love, he immediately forgets all the Affronts and Injuries that have been offer'd him, and enters the Hearts of his greatest Enemies, and there in infinite Charity, Wisdom and Power works the Work of their Redemption, teaching 'em his grand and divine Secrets, unknown to all that know not Love, and enabling them to do what was to them before impossible, and what he has shewn to be very possible to the Spirit of Love when he himself came in the Flesh to die, that by his Death he might give Life to the World.

But these Wretches instead of opening the Door to Love, that surrounds them, calls them and knocks on all sides of them, are so malicious as to shut their Ears and fill themselves with a thousand Buzzes and Distractions that they may not hear the Voice of Love, nor feel his Stroaks, nor give way to his Operations. They throw themselves desperately and madly into the Abyss of a thousand foreign, worldly and devilish Follies, what with the Cares of eating and drinking well, what with those of dressing well, of heaping up Riches, of procuring Esteem and Honour from Fools like themselves, what with stuffing their Heads with im-

impertinent Speculations, Whimfies and Notions which the Enemy of their Salvation lays before them by the vain Sciences and Curiosities of the World to make them spend their Time in the Forgetfulness of Love, till Death comes and the Devil carries them into the bottomless Pit contrary to the designs of Love who waited only their Correspondence to save them and make 'em good by Participation. And yet their blind Comrades that are left behind while these Wretches go to Destruction, tho' they clearly see they have not gone the right Way, and that their Death is not the Death of the Righteous, yet they lay the Fault upon Love, and say, that Love so decreed from all Eternity, and that it was his Will not to have any kindness for them, nor to save them though he might have done it, only he would not.

O Love Divine ! would to God Men would make thee Reparation for so great a Calumny, for the so many and so great Blasphemies and Injuries they so many ways offer thee, and often think they do well in it, so extreamly great is their Blindness ! Wou'd they once knew and understood what thou art, and what thy Thoughts and Works are. O that I, unworthy and poor Creature as I am, could any way contribute to make thee livingly and truly known ; and this was the Aim that mov'd me to commit to writing some Truths concerning Thee, thy Designs and thy Creatures, what thy Conduct was towards them, when thou createdst them, when they fell into Sin, and what thou hast done and wilt still do both without and in Souls to restore them after their Fall, and to reduce all things by thy Providence to a compleat and perfect Redemption. But being so very superficial and so dead before Thee I could produce only inanimate Draughts and Ideas, and those too but very dark and obscure. 'Tis for Thee alone, if it please Thee, to join to them in our Souls the Reality and Life, the living and divine Light of the Heart, notwithstanding all our Offences that make us unworthy of them.

And because my Words and Thoughts are so disproportionate to the immense and incomprehensible Greatness of the infinite Majesty of Love, which is thy self, and of thy Works, which I have dar'd to
speak

Chap.
XVIII.

Speak of, may it please thy Divine Goodness to excuse my childish stuttering Speech concerning them, and to pardon all the Defects that from the Depths of my own Corruption I may have mingled with thy Truth and Works: for, O my God, I think they are not voluntary, and that if I know them, I shou'd my self disown them, if my Heart deceive me not, my Design and Intention in all I have propos'd, are not hid from thee, and I trust thou wilt approve them, and that thou wilt defend me in the Hearts of good Men against the Lyes of such as seeing I do no way favour their Errors, Prejudices, Interests, and Partialities, will it may be endeavour to perswade Men that I have some wicked Designs, and that I have advanced things that turn to thy Dishonour, and to the Disadvantage of thy pure Love and of thy sanctifying Truth: thou knowest this is not true; and wilt as to that matter grant me Peace and Rest, and give me leave instead of all other Apologies, to praise thy Holy Name, thy great Power, thy immense Wisdom, and thy infinite Love, as I now intend to do, joining, for the better ending of this Work, my Spirit to that of thy Holy Prophet.

Psal. 145.

" My God, my King, I will glorifie thee, and
" bless thy Name from Generation to Generation.

" Every day will I bless thee, and praise thy Name
" for ever and ever.

" How great is the Lord! and how worthy of
" Praises! His Greatness is infinite and incomprehen-
" sible.

" One People shall tell thy glorious Works to
" another, and all shall declare thy Power.

" I will be talking of the magnificent Glory of thy
" Majesty, and of thy wonderful Works.

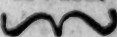
" Men shall shew the Steadfastness of thy Purposes
" and of thy wondrous Works, and I will speak of
" thy Sovereign Grandeur.

" All shall break out into Praises when they remem-
" ber thy great Goodness, and shall highly praise thy
" Justice.

" The Lord is full of Mercies and Compassions; he is slow
" in his Wrath and great and ready in his Mercy,

" The Lord is good to all Men, and the Works of his
" Mercy surpasses all his other Works.

" Let

- “ Let thy Works praise thee, O Lord, and let thy
“ Beloved give Thanks unto thee ; let them shew the
“ Glory of thy Kingdom, and publish thy great Pow- Chap. XVIII.
“ er! 
- “ That the Greatness of thy Power may be known
“ unto Men, and the Magnificence of thy glorious
“ Kingdom.
- “ Thy Kingdom shall be an Everlasting Kingdom,
“ and thy Empire shall endure throughout all Ages.
- “ (a) The Lord is true in all his Words, and good (a) Vul-
“ in all his Actions. gar Edit.
- “ The Lord upholdeth those that are falling, and
“ lifteth up those that are down.
- “ The Eyes of all Creatures wait upon thee, and
“ thou givest them their Meat in due season. Thou
“ openest thy Hand and satisfiest the Desire of every
“ living Creature.
- “ The Lord is just in all his Ways and full of Mer-
“ cy and Goodness in all his Works.
- “ The Lord is nigh to all them that call upon him ;
“ even to all such as call upon him in Truth and Sin-
“ cerity.
- “ He will fulfil the Desire of them that fear him ;
“ he will hear their Cry and save them.
- “ The Lord preserves all that love him, and will de-
“ stroy the Wicked.
- “ Let my Mouth shew forth the Praises of the Lord,
“ and let all Men bless his most holy Name for ever
“ and ever. *Amen.*

The End of the OEconomy of Providence,

Which is

The Sixth and Last Volume

O F

THE DIVINE OECONOMY.

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THE
PRINCIPLES
OF
Real and Internal
RELIGION
Asserted and Vindicated.

OR,

1. A Letter to Mr. Le Clerc, Author
of *The Bibliotheque Universelle*;

AS ALSO,

2. Considerations and Remarks on
his *Parrhasian* Censure of that
Letter.

By P. Poiret.

K with binding

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of The Bibliographic Chamberlains:
A Letter to Mr. Author

ASALA 20

Considerations and Remarks on
his Antiquarian Century of the
Letter.

Dr. P. J. P. J.

Л. О. Д. О. Л.

[illegible]

THAT therefore the English Reader may be the more fully apprized of the dissimilarity of Mr. Le Clerc's Critical Account.

THAT therefore the English Reader
 may be the more fully apprized of the design
 of this Critical Account
 of the Books and Authors
 of the Pelagian System
 in this Letter will be
 explained.

TO THE READER.



MR. Le Clerc (of Amsterdam) has in several of his late Books and Treatises, so boldly attacked the most solid and vital part of real Religion, either by openly denying, or loosely ridiculing the Doctrine of Divine Grace, and the necessity of the Internal Operation of God in order to the Conversion and Restauration of Mankind, that his design seems plainly to have been to do what in him lay to extinguish the very Life and Spirit of Christianity, and to introduce the dead Pelagian System in the room of it.

AND that he might effect this the better, he has laboured to set himself up as the Grand Critick or Censor General of Books and Authors, both Sacred and Profane, and in that imaginary Quality not only dar'd to pervert the plain and receiv'd Sense of many Important Texts of the Holy Scriptures, but also to blacken and misrepresent the Works of many worthy Persons truly eminent for Piety and solid Learning, nay, even to bespatter too some of the most venerable Names of Antiquity.

THAT

genuity of Mr. Le Clerc's Critical Accounts, either of Men or Books, especially when they assert the true Christian Faith in Opposition to his Pelagian and Socinian Errors, it has been thought proper to publish here Mr. Poirer's LETTER to him, occasioned by the very unfair Relation he had given of the Divine Oeconomy in his Bibliothegue Universelle; and also some Considerations and Remarks on the Parrhasian Censure of that Letter in the Book call'd Parrhasiana, which was Written, as the World believes, by Mr. Le Clerc himself. Whence it will appear at large how very unjustly he has dealt by Mr. Poirer and others too of his Character, how extremely Partial his manner of Censuring them is, and in fine, what a poor, lame Account he gives of the Nature of the Christian Institution, which in this Work is fully explained and demonstrated in all its Parts, with respect to its most noble Principle, Means and End.

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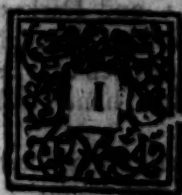


LETTER

TO
Mr. Le Clerc, Author of
*The Bibliothegue Univer-
selle, &c.*

SIR,

I.



Have been long enclined to hope that you would have corrected the Censure you publish'd of my *Divine Oeconomy*, in the 5th Tome of your *Bibliothegue*, after having seen my own Account thereof, in *Novel. Reipub. Lit.* for June and July, 1687.

I. *The occasion of this Letter.*

Wherein I plainly shewed, that you had either mistaken or perverted my meaning in many things. But instead of that I find you have not only Reprinted your Works without any such Correction, but that you also still continue to treat me after the same unworthy manner, both in your ordinary Conversation, and in several new Places of your Books. What first induced, and still prevails with you to use me in such a manner; whether premeditated

A

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Letter I.

tated Malice, or an apprehension that should you give a true and impartial Account of me and my Writings, your Readers would thereby find your own Principles and Opinions confuted, and the contrary ones established; or whether it proceeds from Ignorance, such as all that I offer'd in Answer to your Relation, could not remove, I shall leave it to GOD, your own Conscience, and the Discretion of others to determine.

In the mean time, being willing to think the best of you, I had rather ascribe all you have said and written against me to the last of these Causes than to any other, and therefore in order to remove that the more effectually, I shall now bestow a little more pains upon you.

II. *Pride and Self-love the Origine of all Ignorance and Error.*

II. Our Saviour Christ tells us, *That every one that doth evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reproved*; which is also true of such as broach and Propagate dangerous Errors and Opinions; namely, they hate the Truth, neither will they come to it; yea, they endeavour to keep others from it, lest their own Wicked Errors should be discovered. This clearly shews, that they who by false Relations, Calumnies, or any other external means oppose the Truth, do it not from those Motives which they pretend, but chiefly from a secret hatred of the Truth; and that such Hatred arises from the Love of Darkness and Error, which by reason of the original Corruption and universal Degeneracy of our Nature, we have all in common one with another; for all Men naturally love and esteem themselves, exceedingly; and Darkness and Error favours and supports that Pride and self-love, which Truth (because it convinces Men of their Baseness and Nothingness) on the other hand pulls down and Destroys with all its might.

III. *The means of discovering the same either Internal or External.*

III. Hence it appears, *First*, That all Men, being born corrupted, are prone to love Darkness and Error, and that we have all a secret and latent hatred and aversion to the Truth; and accordingly in Scripture, we find the Character of Mankind in general expressed in these words, *all Men are Lyars*. *Secondly*, That no Man can by his own Natural Power and Ability deliver himself from this Condition, without the help and assistance of some other inward Principle to influence and enable him to turn from Dark-

ness

ness to Light; and unless he fight against his own Letter I.
 Natural Inclinations to Darknels and Error, and
 willingly Sacrifice them all to the Power and Energy
 of the Truth. *Thirdly*, That no Man can be brought
 back from the ways of Error by any external Means,
 but in so far only as they may contribute to make him
 look back and Reflect upon that inward Spring of
 Darknels and Error in himself; all that we can do to
 undeceive a Man, and put him in the right way,
 is only to mark and point out the most noted
 External Rivulets which naturally Issue from that
 source, and which more immediately fall under hu-
 man Observation; that by carefully observing and
 tracing them, he may be the better enabled to dis-
 cover the Internal Spring-head from whence they
 flow.

IV. This latter Method I shall hereafter take IV. We shall
 with you, when I come to trace some of your make use of
 Opinions and Errors; and also when I come to shew those that are
 the Reason not only why you embraced and espoused External only
 them, but also why you set your self with so much upon this oc-
 eagerness to oppose the Truth, and to Calumniate casion, with
 and Misrepresent the Writings of others, as well Mr. Le Clerc,
 as mine, when they happen to contradict, or not to and leave
 favour your Notions; and as to the other Method, the rest to
 which is wholly Internal, I shall leave that to God God and his
 and your own Conscience. own Consci-
ence.

V. But that you may not accuse me of Partiality, V. We have
 or say, that I prefer others to you, or my self to all, by Na-
 any one upon any internal Account, I must, as in ture, the same
 Duty bound, acknowledge before I proceed, that by wicked Seeds
 Nature we are all equally fallen and corrupted; and of Evil in
 that I have in my self the same latent and wicked us,
 Seeds of Evil, as you have.

For, both I, as well as you and all other Men, Which
 was born in the Element of Pride and Self-love, are Cherished
 grew up with, and by Education more and more and Improved
 sucked in and cherished the Principles thereof. I by Education.
 acknowledge that both I and others that were my
 fellow Students, and even my Tutors too, instead
 of applying our selves to the Study of that Holy
 Doctrine, which teaches us to despise and hate our
 selves; which shews us how vile and impotent we
 are in ourselves, and how base and ungrateful to God;
 and which consequently would have taught us to

Letter I.

aspire after that Wisdom which alone can reform and subdue the great and universal Corruptions of our Nature ; I acknowledge, I say, that instead of this, we bestowed all our time and labour upon the Study of such vain and empty Trifles as most contributed to confirm and cherish in us our own natural Pride and Self-love ; for such supposed Accomplishments we were praised by those whom we looked upon as proper Judges ; and because their praises were grateful to us, and finding that I became more and more acceptable to others upon such Accounts ; I looked upon all the Ideal Knowledge that I acquired by such studies, as the proper Ornaments, or as a Dress suitable to, and well-becoming my proud self-love ; yea, I considered them even as Life itself ; so that at last I began to espouse the Notions and Opinions that I had sucked in, with that warmth and obstinacy that I could not bear to hear any Doubts or Disputes raised about them ; yea, I even wished that whatever was at any time published contrary to, or different from my own Notions, might be either wholly cancelled, or at least so effectually exposed and ridiculed, as that it might fall of itself, and in order to find out some solid Foundation, wherewith to support and please my Pride, I began to slight the study of the Languages and critical Learning, as empty, frothy and superficial ; and that possibly not so much because they are so indeed, as to indulge my own Vanity ; and I applied my self to the study of God's Works, both Material and Spiritual, Physical and Metaphysical, Supernatural and Theological ; and the Proficiency that I made in all those several Branches of Knowledge, made me conclude that the Opinion I had of my self, as well as the Character which others were pleased to give of my Learning, was not ill Grounded.

VI. *How and by what means God brought me to see the vanity and danger of my own Pride and Self-love.*

VI. But because God Resists the Proud, hence I mixed and added many Chimera's to my own barren Ideas, which were by no means able to restrain my vain and irregular Desires, and I gave my self up so entirely to the Idol of corrupted Reason, which I adored even almost as a God, that I might and should have fallen into all sorts of Vanity and Error, if the tender Care and Goodness of God, *Who desireth that all Men should be Saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, had not graciously interposed and prevented me. He took away from me the opportunities of mak-

making Physical Experiments, with which I was always much delighted, and of much Reading, which now began to become dangerous and even hurtful to me by reading *Curcellus's* Book against original Corruption; and he furnish'd me with the better and more Pious Writings of *Thomas a Kempis*, and *Thaulerius*, and with the *German Theology*: Add to this, That from my Infancy, he had implanted in me some sparks of Divine Fear, which I always retained, and with which I was always touch'd both before and without any previous act of Ratiocination, so that the efforts of my own corrupted Reason were thereby restrained, and I sincerely wished that all that I had, or did might become subservient to his Glory; so that in consequence of such Good Desires and Inclinations (which were also the Gift of his Grace) I began to see, tho' in a very confus'd Manner, the Corruption, in which the World and even *Christendom* itself at this Day lies wholly Buried. I forthwith observed then that Purification of the Soul, was not, as it ought to be, sufficiently recommended in Divinity, nor the absolute necessity thereof clearly enough deduced from and founded upon the Love of God and our Neighbour.

Letter I.

By furnishing
me with Good
Books,And convince
ing me of the
absolute ne-
cessity of Purification.

VII. After this, all the several Schisms and Contentions of Sects began to displease me. And seeing I wished and desired that all Parties might come to some Agreement, I endeavour'd to put the best Construction I could upon every thing that differ'd from those Principles and Opinions in which I had been Educated, and for the sake of Unity and Concord, to reduce them all into one as near as possibly I could, not excepting the *Socinians* themselves, who I thought might easily be brought back to the Unity of the Truth, by the help of some few Principles, such as (1.) That GOD, and the Things in God, are incomprehensible by any Human Mind; and that what we do conceive of him, is so Imperfect, that it always comes infinitely short of what yet remains in him which we do not comprehend. (2.) * That in GOD there is first, a thinking Substance or Nature, secondly, The Direct, Essential and Adequate Object of that thinking Power, viz. Its own luminous Idea, Representation or Form, and, thirdly, The joyful Acquiescence of God therein. (3.) That these three are

VII. Upon
which I began
to see the mis-
chief of Sects.
And endea-
vour'd to
bring all Par-
ties to some
Agreement.
Not excepting
the Socinians,

* vid. infra

Letter I.

*Who might be
convinc'd of
their Errors,
were it not
for Pelagia-
nism.*

*Which is the
great source of
all Heresies
and Errors.*

VIII. Other
means of dis-
covering the

Corruption and Errors of Mankind;

what we call the Trinity in GOD; and that more-
over there are innumerable other things in GOD in-
finitely exceeding our Capacities, (4.) That in *Christ*
there is his Human Nature consisting of a Created
Soul and Body, which is not GOD; and that the
Eternal Divinity is present with the same in a closer
manner than with any other Creature; so that such
an Union in so singular and peculiar a manner may be
called Personal, and upon the same account the Huma-
nity and Divinity in *Christ* may be called one Person,
in which (according to the first Principle) there
are an infinite number of Things, exceeding Human
Comprehension. These Things being rightly explain-
ed, I thought might suffice to reclaim the *Socinians*,
and to bring them back through *Christian Love* into
the same Unity of Faith with us. But I had not then
observ'd that *Pelagianism* was the true spring and
source of all their Errors. For *Pelagianism*, or the
Denial of a real, inward, and universal Corruption
in our Nature; and the disowning the necessity of
Divine Grace, in order to purify, illuminate and re-
store all Things both inwardly and outwardly, is the
cheifest and most pernicious of all the *Socinian Errors*:
Otherwise if they would acknowledge their own Cor-
ruption, and humbly address themselves to God, and
implore his Light and Help, they would, by the Di-
vine Assistance, soon come to see their Errors about the
Holy Trinity and the Person of *Christ*. But so long as
they will neither acknowledge their own Corruption,
nor own themselves to be Sick, nor think that they
want any inward Help or Cure of God, for all their
Faculties; but rather trust wholly to the Activity of
their own Corrupted Reason in searching after Divine
Truths, however Orthodox they may have been in
other Things, they cannot chuse but run into all sorts
of pernicious Heresies, and even sometimes into A-
theism itself. Of such a pernicious Nature is this
fundamental Heresy, that where it is not, all others
may easily be removed, and where it is, they most na-
turally and certainly follow it. And I confess, that in
adhering too close to my own Corrupted Reason, I was
approaching nearer to this Destructive Fountain than
I was aware of.

VIII. So far had I gone by such ways and means
as I have already mention'd, and I thought I had

made a better Progress than many others, when it pleased God, by the means of a certain Virgin, whom you and many others despise, to shew me by many glorious Truths, first, in a more general manner, the Universal Corruption, Darknes, Errors and Vanities of Mankind, all which I could not in my Judgment but assent to; after which he was also pleased more particularly to touch my Heart in the most sensible manner, with the sense of my own Pride and Self-love, which 'till then, thro' blindness, I thought had been but very inconsiderable. Upon this, I began to feel in my self a Repugnance and Indifference; I perceived that I was tempted to despise and even to ridicule those Divine Truths, which touched me so nearly. This startled and surpriz'd me: and looking more narrowly into my self (who 'till then thought I had been incapable of treating any Thing that I knew to be a Divine Truth, in such a manner) I open'd my Soul in great trouble before GOD, acknowledging my own wretchedness, and the Diabolical Dispositions of my Heart, and besought him, that he would either root them out of me; or if they were incurable, that he would rather extinguish me than suffer such Hellish Inclinations to exert themselves against the Truth; thinking it better that I only should Perish and be Damn'd, than to live and fight against his glorious Truth, or be an Instrument of Damnation to many others. From that time I began to have hopes that the Lord had graciously heard the Voice of my Prayer; for from thence forward I began more clearly to know and to Love the Truth in opposition to my own Pride and Self-love, to my own natural Inclinations, and to all the Ornaments and Helps of vain imaginary Learning; then I wished and prayed that he would more powerfully purify and cleanse my Heart, until he had rooted out every thing that was not of his own Planting; then I resolv'd in and through the Strength and Assistance of his Grace, to use all my endeavours to recommend the same Truth to others, without regarding the Calumnies, Oppositions, and Reproaches of Men, how repugnant soever such treatment might be to my own Pride and Self-love, which if they were but mortified thereby, I was sure would redound to my own Good: I say, I resolv'd to do so by the help of Divine Grace, because that from what I had but lately felt in my self, I had Learned that I ought not to trust to my self nor to my own Fidelity towards the

A 4

Truth;

Letter I.

IX. *The Reason why I have given this account of my self.*

X. *Some account of Mr. Le Clerc's Writings in so far as they have occasion'd this Letter. * vid. Parthal. Pag. 353, &c. He is careful of Writing in a Good Style; But not of teaching sound Doctrines; Neither in his Dogmaticks,*

Net Polemicks.

Truth; that to espouse the Truth in Sincerity is the Gift of God; that in our Corrupted Hearts there are the latent seeds of Enmity against God, and Hatred against the Truth; and that moreover, all those who hate the Truth, do it not knowingly and with design; but sometimes it flows from that native fund of Pride and Self-love, which all Mankind are so deeply plung'd into, that they do not see the Evil thereof; and that therefore most Men who thus wander astray, deserve rather Christian Commiseration than to be Hated or Despised.

IX. These things, Sir, I have thought fit to mention more particularly to you, not only to shew you how ready I am to acknowledge my own failings, that so you may not take it amiss when I tell you yours; but chiefly in hopes that if you will give yourself the trouble to examin and sift your own Heart, and use some such method as I have mention'd, you may find more Benefit and Instruction thereby, than from all the Disputes and Wranglings in the World.

X. But leaving these Things to God and your own Heart: I shall now more particularly apply myself to consider your Writings, as they are the occasion of this Letter: Whatever Reasons I have to think that you are the Author of several Books; I shall not therefore call any yours, but only such as you *publickly own, or such as plainly appear and which several Persons say they know to be yours, such as the *Theological Epistles of Liborius concerning Holy Love*, the Principles whereof are both agreeable with those of your other Writings, and sometimes either commended or defended in them. They that have read your Writings, may observe, that you take great Pains to write in a good stile, for fear of offending your Readers Ears, and of losing the Reputation of an Elegant Writer; But I wish you had been as careful that your matter had been true, sound and good! For in your Dogmaticks, instead of finding solid and salutary Truths, there is hardly any thing to be met with, but either little, insignificant Critical Niceties, and some very Superficial Observations, or very dangerous Errors in my Opinion, especially where you represent (as in the above-mentioned Epistles particularly) the *Socinian Principles* (and some others even worse than they) in such a Light, as if you had it chiefly at Heart to support their sinking Cause, and as if it were a matter indifferent to Salvation, whether a Man be a *Socinian* or not. In your Polemical Writings any one may see, that you deny and impugn the Grace and Operation of God in

in us to that Degree, that you look upon it as a mere
 † Chimera, and have the presumption to || affirm that
 no where in Holy Scripture, the Grace of God signi-
 fies the internal and immediate Operation of the Holy
 Spirit in the Soul, when yet the Thing itself, or the
 Internal Operation of God in Souls, is asserted
 almost in every Chapter of the Bible; yea, in the
 Three first Chapters of the *Ephesians*, you may find the
 same thing mention'd after several ways all to the
 same Sense, and even with the Express Name and Cha-
 racter of *ἡ ἰσχυρὴ ἡ ἐμπνευστικὴ ἡ ἡγία*. Further, every
 one will observe that you wholly reject the Spiritual
 Sense and meaning of the Scriptures, and that you deny
 Original Sin and every thing else that stands in the
 way of your belov'd *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Notions.
 And finally, it may be observ'd, that where you † re-
 late many things, as from others, with the same teme-
 rity as if a Blind Man should undertake to discourse
 about Colours, concerning the Inspirations of Holy
 Men you have also traduced many Places of the Holy
 Writings, of *Job*, the *Psalms*, and the *Proverbs*, all
Ecclesiastes, and all the *Song of Solomon*, as unworthy of
 the Holy Spirit, the last of which you compare to the
Song of Poliphemus, concerning *Galatea* in *Ovid's Me-
 tamorphoses*.

XI. And as to the Persons you set your self against as
 your Adversaries, they are chiefly those that oppose
 and refute your Errors, *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism* es-
 pecially, upon which account you fall foul, not only
 on the Modern Orthodox Divines, but even on the
 Fathers of the Primitive Church, and especially *St. Au-
 gustine*; because he was a strenuous Assertor of the Anti-
Pelagian and Anti-*Socinian* Doctrines. And as to your
 manner of treating your Adversaries and their Princi-
 ples, you seem to have propos'd to your self the
 following Rules. 1. To irritate and provoke them to
 use angry and harsh Expressions in their Answers, if
 they be alive, from which you take occasion to lessen
 and destroy their Credit in every thing else. 2. To
 represent them, if they be Dead, as mean and con-
 temptible, the better to inspire your Readers with
 Contempt and Hatred of them. And because 'tis not
 possible that all your Adversaries, or at least that the
 most venerable among the Saints, should have given
 occasion to such Mockery and Raillery, you sup-
 ply that defect by the Help of the following Rules.
 3. You charge them with things false, absurd, and
 contradictory,

Letter I.

† Entret. p.

325.

|| Ibid 325.

& seq;

What Doctrines

Mr. Le Clerc

chiefly opposes.

Eph. 1. 6, 7,

8, 13, 17,

18, 19,

2. 5, 6, 7, 8,

10, 22;

3. 7, 16, 17,

19. 20.

† Sentimens.

Let. 11, 12.

XI. And what
Authors.In what man-
ner he treats
them.

Letter I.

contradictory, in Words the same indeed, or like to theirs; but in Composition, Application and Sense, wholly different; that by the first Artifice you may the better preserve your own Credit, and by the other destroy theirs, and ridicule them as Madmen, whom you thus traduce. 4. The Divine salutary and essential Truths which they deliver and inculcate in the most divine and lively manner that can be, you pass over in silence, and you carp at such trifling and superficial things, concerning the letter and other critical Niceties, which they who chiefly regarded the substantial Part, seldom or never minded. 5. In such things where you can find no room for Criticism, if your Adversaries have omitted any thing material, you are angry with them, that they should pass it over in Silence, and if they do take notice of every thing relating to the Subject they treat of, you accule them of superfluity, and that they take notice of things which every Body knew before: If they advance such things as agree with the commonly receiv'd Opinions, you say they are common, and have been often said before; and if they propose some things which possibly are not so obvious, you blame them as if *they affected to think otherwise than the rest of Mankind, and that they would be thought to be guided by some new Light from Heaven.* So that whether they speak or hold their Tongues, they can no ways escape your sharp and unjust Reflections. 6. Those good Things which either you do not understand, or but imperfectly, and which you would not be thought to impugn directly, or which you cannot attack or refute by any Arguments, and especially when they clearly destroy your own pernicious Opinions; such Things I say, that you may the more artfully expose them, you usually represent by such Names and Characters as you think fittest to raise either an Indifference or an Aversion, or Contempt, or Laughter in your Readers. Thus every where in your Books, the inward and operating Grace of God, and other Sound and Orthodox Doctrines, are branded with the Names of *Scholastic Errors, Philosophical Abstractions, Chimera's and Dreams, Platonic Ideas, Metaphysical Subtilties, Mystical Mysteries*, and such like Epithets, a Thousand Times over and over, even to a Surfeit; and the Orthodox themselves sometimes called *Schoolmen*, then *Metaphysicians*, at other times *Platonists*, and again *Mystics*; and by these and such like Methods, after having infus'd such

such ridiculous Notions of your Adversaries, into the Minds of your Readers, you endeavour to attract and fix their esteem upon your self, for having exposed and shewn the Folly and Inconsistency of such Idle and Chymical Fancies.

Letter II.

XII. I might yet recite many more of your Artifices, were it not that I propose to confine my self to those parts of your Writings only, where you have exercised your wrangling critical Talents, against me; and some others, without meddling with those that are Positive and Dogmatical. And altho' whatever I have alledg'd will appear to be true, from almost every part of your Writings, even at first opening, yet I shall take the pains to prove what I have asserted by proper Quotations from the Books themselves. But first, I think it will not be amiss to let the Reader see that you have intermix'd some things in your Writings, even worse (as I hinted before) than any thing the Socinians have yet advanced; and then to acquaint the Reader with the particular Reasons why you are so angry with me, and why you have Publish'd so false and unjust an account of me and my Writings to the World.

XII. What parts of Mr. Le Clerc's Writings are Animadverted upon in this Letter.

Whereof some things are worse than Socinianism itself.

XIII. In the first Epistle of your *Liberium*, * 'tis affirm'd, that the Divinity and Humanity in *Christ*, cannot be strictly united together as two Creatures can. And in order to prove this assertion, *Liberium* promises to demonstrate, *That two Creatures can be more closely united together, than a Creature can be with God*, that is, that God and the Creature are less capable of being united together than one Creature with another. By which assertion, not only that from whence the superexcellent Dignity and Glory of *Christ* arises, is destroyed, but in Men also that Desire and Love which is due to God is greatly discourag'd; and at the same time our Love, Desire and Affection towards the Creatures (in as much as we can enjoy them more than God) is highly extoll'd, inflam'd and prefer'd; For that is always the most Lovely, with which the greatest and strictest Union and Enjoyment can be made. But I do not think that any of the Socinians, in extenuating the Hypostatic Union in *Christ*, ever came to those extremes, or ever thought of establishing their Heresy upon a Principle so injurious and so destructive of the Fundamentals of Christianity, such as is the Love of God and the withdrawing our Love from the Creatures, But *Liberium* not only very confidently

XIII. A dangerous Position. * Pag. 7 and 8.

Letter I. *confidently affirms such Things, but even attempts to demonstrate them, in the following manner.*

The more Things agree in their Nature, the more capable they are of a closer Union;

But there is a greater Agreement between two finite Spirits (OR TWO CREATURES) than between a finite Spirit and God (OR BETWEEN A CREATURE AND GOD.)

Therefore two Creatures may be more closely United together, than God and a Creature can.

The Fallacy thereof detected.

*A Wise Demonstration indeed! But seeing we cannot expose such dangerous Notions too much, I shall beg leave by way of Digression, to shew the Fallacy of this notable Sophism. Things are said to agree, or bear a relation one to another in two respects: First, in respect of the likeness of the matter or form; or secondly, in respect of the end and design; as when one thing is made for or in order to enjoy something else. I will give some plain Instances. In the first respect, a Foot and a Foot, a Shoe and a Shoe, a Town and a Town, a Man and a Man, agree together; in the other, a Foot and a Shoe, a Man and a Town, and in the same respect also GOD and a Creature. This being observ'd, the Fallacy or Inconclusiveness of *Liberius's* Sophism clearly appears. For if you take the Maxim he builds upon, as regarding the first sort of Agreement, it is both false and absurd to say, that things of the same matter and form can be more closely united together, than those Things, which however they do not agree in that respect, do yet agree in respect of their end and design: And the Reason is this; because that those Things which agree in matter and form, are only so far like one another, but not therefore properly capable of Union: But in that one thing agrees with, or answers to another in respect of its end, it evidently follows from thence, that the Nature, Faculties, Properties and Constitution of that Thing, must have a Tendency and Disposition to the other, in order to receive or to be united to the same in the closest manner that can be. And this is evident from the foregoing Examples: For tho' a Shoe and a Shoe agree more together in respect of their matter and form than a Shoe and a Foot; yet they are not more capable of being united together.*

ther than a Shoe and a Foot, which agree in respect of the End: And the same Thing is evident in a Thousand other Instances. But if the *Likerian* Maxim be understood with respect to the End (as it ought to be) then the assumption is false; for, if it be granted that those Things may be united more closely together, that agree more with one another in respect of the End; the assumption is false, that a Creature agrees more with a Creature, than God and a Creature; for a Creature, especially a Human Creature, of which we now treat, is not the End and Design of any other Creature. But God is the End and Design of the Creature, which is therefore made of such a Nature that it might be united to God. Therefore God and a Creature may be more closely united together, than one Creature can with another. And thus I have shewn the Fallacy and Weakness of this pretended and truly Heretical Demonstration of *Liberius*; the same which from another consideration I also refuted in * another Place, together with many more of your dangerous and ill-grounded Tenets.

Letter I.

* Cog. Rat.
Ed. 2. p. 238.

XIV. And here indeed we must look for the true and particular cause, why you are so great an Enemy, in your Accounts, to my Writings.

For tho' at first I had no Intention to attack either you or any other, yet seeing I proposed to employ my Pen about such Things as I thought might best promote the Glory of God, the Truth, and the Salvation of Men, and encourage Vertue and solid Learning, and Discountenance Pride, Vanity and Self-love; therefore as often as I meet with any Books in which any of these Things were attacked, or in danger of being shaken, then I endeavour'd not only to establish my own Principles more firmly against the Contents of such Books, but I very often either refuted or anticipated their Arguments, especially if they seemed to carry any force with them, or if I found them in Anonymous Books, where when no Author is Named, no Body ought to have thought himself attack'd. And in this manner when your Anonymous Books (some whereof I did not know 'till some Years after that they were yours) came into my Hands, and besides when I understood that you despised and spoke publicly against my Writings and Sentiments, in order to prejudice others against them;

XIV. The particular Reasons, why Mr. Le Clerc is angry with this Author's Writings.

then

Letter I.

(a) *Entretiens
sur divers
Matières de
Theol.*

then I not only more firmly Established the Principles upon which the Truths that I had published were grounded, against such fundamental and pernicious Errors as I found scattered throughout your Anonymous Writings; but I also vindicated the Truth from your Exceptions, and subverted the Foundations of your Principles almost in every thing. This I have chiefly done in my *Divine Oeconomy*, where I begin in the very Preface and enquire into the Prejudices of (a) one of your Anonymous Books against the Knowledge of things Intellectual; and in the rest of the work I have in several Places expressly confuted your *Pelagian* Notions, and destroyed the Principles of *Socinianism*, which you seem to have undertaken either to defend or to Palliate: Again, I have clearly shewn how improper and insufficient Critical Learning is, without the inward Light and Operation of the Holy Spirit, either to interpret the Scriptures, or to Judge what Books are Canonical; and finally, I have in other Places fully confuted your Doctrine concerning the Power and State of Man, and that of Original Sin, which you deny, with all the Arguments and Exceptions you have offered in that Anonymous Book; all which, with many more of your Errors, I have fully and irrefragably overturn'd and destroy'd; so that he that shall read my Writings, will be sufficiently armed against the Danger and Infection of your Pernicious Errors.

XXV. *Whether it be probable that Mr. Le Clerc should publish a true Account of the Oeconomy.*

XV. The case standing thus, you happen to come to see my *Oeconomy*, which Relates those your Errors, and then you pretend to give an Account, or Epitome thereof in your *Bibliothèque*; but whether you could do it without Indignation and Hatred, let those judge, who will consider what answer must be given to this previous Question; viz. Whether it be probable that a Man, whose Principles and Studies leads him not only not to acknowledge, but even to excuse and deny the Corruption of his own Nature, and to reject the inward help and assistance of God; and who, besides the common Springs of Hatred against the truth above mentioned, has those particular Reasons of aversion, which arise from being contradicted in those things which he has espoused as nearest and dearest to himself; whether, I say, it be probable that such a Person will do Justice to that work, and faithfully relate the Arguments in their full force, which totally subvert and overthrow his own beloved Notions and Opinions?

Opinions? It is fit then to let you know now (which I have not so plainly done before) that you are not a judge or an Historian in this case, but an Adversary; and that therefore your Readers ought not in common Prudence to judge of my Writings by any Character that you have or may give of them.

XVI. I must own indeed there are several things in your Account, which I have no Reason to find fault with; for surely if every thing that you had said of me had been false, you had taken an effectual way utterly to Ruin your own Credit. But when you relate many things right, and then at the same time not only omit the Principal, but even intermix many absurdities with them, 'tis evident that the whole will appear the more credible to many; as there are more Truths intermixed with them; unless some of a more penetrating Judgment should rather conclude against you, that he who, even by his adversaries Confession, had advanced some such evident and important Truths, could not be guilty of such absurdities as you charge upon him; whence they could not but justly suspect the Truth and Impartiality of your Account.

XVII. The truth is, you have imputed to me so many false, absurd and contradictory things; and you have done it in so Ironical and Sarcastical a manner, that they that believe your Account, cannot but despise me as one that knows not what he says, and look upon my Writings as absurd and unworthy of being read; and this I am not at all ashamed to repeat, because I find I am not the only Person that you have treated thus, but that 'tis your Custom to treat many of the best and most learned Fathers and Doctors, both ancient and modern, and many Noble and Divine Truths, in the same ridiculous and sarcastical manner. But of these and such like I shall say more hereafter.

XVIII. In the mean time I shall observe to you that there are two things in general, which shew that you have not had a strict regard to the Truth in your Account. First, That though in the Preface to the *Oeconomy of the Creation*, I particularly advised and intreated my Readers, not to judge of the whole work by the first Book, because it contains some abstracted Truths, and for that almost every thing in it is either contrary to, or much more sublime than the common Notions; you notwithstanding, passing over the other

Letter I.

XVI. Mr. Le Clerc's Artifice to impose upon his Readers.

XVII. He abuses others as well as Mr. Poiret.

XVIII. Two general accusations against Mr. Le Clerc. The first general Accusation.

Letter I.
*That he does
 not give a fair
 Account of the
 Oeconomy.*

*MR. LE CLERC
 VOTRE
 MI ET ACHETÉ
 DE VOUS ÉCRIVE*

*MR. LE CLERC
 VOTRE
 MI ET ACHETÉ
 DE VOUS ÉCRIVE*

XIX. The Second general Accusation,
That he charges Mr. Poiret with writing Mystically.

*MR. LE CLERC
 VOTRE
 MI ET ACHETÉ
 DE VOUS ÉCRIVE*

(A) Pag. 547.

five Books, or but slightly mentioning them, give only an account of the Contents of the first Book; although in the Preface I expressly advised, that they who are not used to Metaphysical Speculations (such as those are for whom your Popular Discourses seem to be composed) should begin with the following Books, and which therefore, if you had acted the honest and sincere part, you ought to have given an account of first; and indeed you recite the Contents of the first Book (which you have more than once confessed both to me and others, that you do not understand) in such a manner, as if you seemed not only sometimes to forget what you are about, but always to have no regard to what is delivered in the following Books; thus you think that in the first Book there is wanting the Reconciliation of the Divine Predictions about future Contingencies with the Liberty of Man's Will; whereas I have not only shewn how they are reconcileable in the last Book, but also in the Preface to the first Book; and afterwards in the Twelfth Chapter thereof, I expressly told the Reader, that although the chief Principles upon which it depended were laid down there, yet that the matter was not to be discussed there, but in the last Book, to which it properly belonged. I thought it had been according to the Rules of Criticism to read before you Censure; but it seems great Critics think they have no occasion to read and consider any thing that they take upon them to relate and judge of.

XIX. The other general Complaint I have to make against you is, That you endeavour to persuade the World that my Writings contain other matters than really they do; affirming almost upon every occasion that I, whom you call a Mylick, do treat of Mystical things in a very Mystical manner, and this Character you apply even in your Index to all my Sentiments; nay, you are so fond of this Topick, that you not only call my *Irenicum*, which treats of the present Controversies in *Christendom*, Mystical; but in the (A) Pag. 547. Seventh (a) Tome of your *Bibliothèque*, where you pretend to give an Account of the Works of *Harphius* and *Molinos*, you affirm, that the Year 1687 ought to be called both by them and me a Mystical Year; by them, because they published one or two; and by me, because in that Year I published eight *Mystical Books*: With this Invention of yours you are so

so pleased, and you think it will so mightily contribute to raise the Laughter of your Readers, and to depreciate my Writings, that you not only repeat it more than Ten times in the compass of a few Pages, but even in your daily Conversation; when you have occasion to speak of me or mine, you continually harp upon the same string. But to set you right in this matter, I must tell you; that I would not only not for all the World despise those things which you so slightly call Mystical; because they are nothing else but the Revealed Treasures of all Divinity; but that I so highly esteemed them, that if they were to be purchased with the loss of all worldly Goods, and with the greatest Sufferings and Afflictions, I heartily wish that God would enable me to say with a cheerful Heart, as the Divine Ignatius said, *Let me be burnt and crucified; let me be exposed to Wild Beasts, and my Bones lie unburied; let me be cut Joint by Joint, and let my whole Body be ground to Powder; yea, let me undergo the Torments of Hell, so that I may but at last enjoy JESUS CHRIST, and his secret and mystical Embraces!* But though I come infinitely short of these things, and have not yet taken upon me to write upon such Subjects, yet I have published, and illustrated with proper Prefaces, several excellent Mystical Treatises written by others: And these I have sometimes commended in my Writings; I have quoted some of their Principles; I have explained some of their Phrases; and I have removed several Difficulties that occurred in them; and the better to dispose my Readers to Enquire after and to peruse them, I have here and there given them a Taste of what they are to expect from the Books themselves; and all this I have done to shew and recommend, as far as in me lay, such helps, infinitely exceeding any thing of mine, as I thought most conducive to excite in good and well disposed Souls a more ardent Love of God, and to stir them up to a more vigorous pursuit after their own Eternal Happiness, and to adore and celebrate the wonderful things of God. But to say that my Books are therefore Mystical, or that every thing in them is Mystical, follows no more from thence, than that the first Edition of my *Cogitations* is Mystical, which is what no Body ever dreamed of; although in that (a) work I several times mention some Mystical Authors with Approbation; or than that your Books are Poetical Books, because that in them you oftner quote and

Letter I. commend *Horace* and *Ovid*, than I do the *Mysticks*; or for that you recommend *Ovid's Metamorphoses* and *Horace's Odes*, as excellent Helps towards understanding and interpreting the Holy Scriptures.

XX. Whether Mr. Le Clerc would not approve of *Mystical Theology* if it favoured *Socinianism*, &c.

Upon some occasions he actually has recourse to it.

(a) Epist. Liber. Pag. 62. 65.
(b) Ibid. Pag. 61.

(c) John, ch. I. B. I. v. 10.
(d) Col. ch. I. v. 16, 17.

But very erroneously and absurdly.

XX. Let me intreat you, Sir, to deal plainly and sincerely with me: Did the *Mystical Theology* favour your *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Glosses, would you shew so great an abhorrence of it, as to call all Books written in that manner, by way of Contempt, *Mystical*? Nay, it is not observable that, even your own *Liberius*, although he is careful not to name the word *Mystical*, for fear of falling under his own lash, yet that when he thought the *Socinian* Cause could be any wise supported by *Mysticks*, has actually made use of *Allegorical* (which in your Opinion is *Mystical*) *Theology*? And hence it is, that as to those places of Scripture, where the Creation of the World is in the most express terms attributed to *Christ* as his work; *Liberius*, that he might explain them in favour of the *Socinians*, does with *Sotinus* and his followers, suggest that they ought to be understood of the *Allegorical* or *Mystical* Creation, and of the *Mystical* Operations and Creatures (which indeed he does not presume expressly to name so, but calls them (a) *New* instead of *Mystical*;) and the Reason he gives is, that which is the foundation of all *Allegorical Theology*, viz. (b) *That innumerable things that were done before the Gospel did shadow out and typify those things which were to be done under the Gospel.* And accordingly these Places; *In the beginning was the word. and the word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made, &c.* And *The World was made by him: Again, All things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, &c.* Which (c) *St. John* and (d) *St. Paul* refer to *Christ*: If according to the declared Sense of *Liberius* and the *Socinians*, they be explained in other words and in proper terms, we ought to reject the literal Sense altogether, and expound them thus: "In the *Mystical* beginning " was the Word, and the Word was *Mystically* with " God, and God was *Mystically* the Word. All *Mystical* Things were *Mystically* made by him; and " without him was not any *Mystical* thing made, " that was *Mystically* made. Again; The *Mystical* " World was *Mystically* made by him. And again; " All *Mystical* things were *Mystically* created by him " and

“ and for him ; and he is Mystically before all My- Letter I.
“ stical Things, and so on.

XXI. It would make a Man smile to see those who XXI. Mr. Le
are otherwise the greatest Despisers of Mystical Theo- Clerc not yet
logy, forced against their will, rather than quit their acquainted
Errors, to endeavour so Ridiculously to betake them- with the My-
selves to it in order to support their wretched Cause. stical Theology.
Thus Monsieur *Le Clerc* then is turn'd Mystick! but as
'tis against his Will, so neither is it for any long con-
tinuance ; He knows not yet what the Mystical Theo-
logy is, which therefore he ought first to have learned
from some Author, v. g. from the Preface to a Book
entituled (a) *The Theology of the Heart*, and from the (a) *La Theo-*
last Book of the Second Part thereof. He smells only logie du Cœur.
at a distance that 'tis no Friend to his Erroneous
Principles, and to the other superficial parts of Learn-
ing: He knows it is equally disagreeable to worldly
Minds, and to the Vain and Superficial ; to the
more Sensual (which is by much the greater) part
of Mankind ; and even to some of good Dispositions,
who are imposed upon by the Calumnies of others ;
and these were sufficient Motives with him, in order
to blast the Credit of my Writings, which contradict
his Principles almost in every thing, most injuriously
to brand them with the hateful Character of being
Mystical, and to affirm, contrary to all Reason, that
they treat of nothing but what's Mystical.

XXI. Thus, Sir, you make no scruple to call (b) the XXII. *Proved*
Reasonings and Proofs which I make use of to De- by several In-
monstrate Free Will ; The Arguments evincing Orig- stances.
inal Sin and the Propagation of Souls ; the last Exter- (b) *Bibl. V.*
nal Events of Things which I recite ; my Analysis of Pag. 432, 438,
the Epistle to the *Romans* ; these, I say, and many 439.
other things you take upon you (with how much ju-
stice let others judge) to call Mystical, which ought
not to be accounted as any part of Mystical Theology.
After such usage, if I had a mind to encounter you
at your own Weapons, I might apply to you the *And therefore*
Words of the Son of *Syrach*, *De mendacio Ineruditiois* ought to keep
tua confundere ; or that of *Apelles*, *Ne sutor ultra Cre-* within his own
pidam ; or something to that purpose, as, *No Criticus* bounds.
ultra Cortices.

XXIII. Here you'll say, It appears that your com- XXIII. Obj.
plaint against me, that I am angry with, and (c) ex- That Mr. Poi-
ret, despises
Critical Learning.

(c) *Bibl. V. Pag. 414.*

Letter I.

Answered :

Archbishop
Usher com-
mended, and
Erasmus.

Who was both
a great Cri-
tick and a
true Lover of
Mystical Theo-
logy.

claim against the Criticks, is well grounded. If with Pareus, a famous Divine, I had absolutely affirmed, that the Devil was certainly the Author of Criticism, I might possibly have in some measure deserved your Censure. But such sober Criticks as under the Letter search for and recommend the Spirit, I not only do not find fault with, but highly respect and esteem them, and most sincerely recommend them to others : Such as among others was lately the illustrious Archbishop Usher, who first published and highly esteemed the Epistle of St. Barnabas, full throughout of Allegorical and Mystical Meanings; and in the preceeding Age the great Erasmus, who scarce left his equal. He, though he was an universal Scholar, and the greatest Critick of his Age, yet he did not scruple frequently to intermix many Allegorical and Mystical Things, as so many rare and precious Gems to adorn his works, and especially throughout his excellent Paraphrase upon the New Testament; and the same Excellent Person was also the first that published, and exceedingly recommended the Commentaries of Arnobius the younger on the Psalms, which also abound with Mystical Senses. The same Person in publishing the Works of some of the chiefest of the Fathers (such as Irenaeus, Cyprian, Hierom, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, &c.) so highly esteemed the Mystical things, which very often occur in 'em, that he more particularly commended and preferred them above all the rest; and so great a lover was he of this sort of Knowledge, that if it was for nothing else, yet he would deserve Immortal Honour for the pains he took in Collating and Correcting Origen's Works, the greatest Mystick among the Fathers, whom upon the Account of his singular skill in the Holy Scriptures, and in every other thing, his indefatigable Labours, his admirable Vertues, and stedfast sanctity of Life, but more-especially upon the Mystical Account, he preferred almost to all the rest. And hence likewise, in the Second Chapter of his Enchiridion, called, *The Christian Warriour*, he lays down this Rule: *Among all the Interpreters of the Holy Scriptures, love those especially WHO DEPART MOST FROM THE LETTER; such as are chiefly after St. Paul, Origen, Ambrose, Hierom, Augustine.* He adds: *For I perceive that our Modern Divines, stick too much to the Letter, and are more intent about the captious Niceties of Words, Than in searching out the Mysteries couched under them: As if indeed St. Paul had not truly said,*

Letter I.

said, that Our Law is SPIRITUAL; I have heard of some, who are so hugely pleased with those Human Comments (consider I pray, what sort of Persons he here means) That they look upon the Interpretations of the ancients as scarce any thing but Dreams;—They grow old in the Letter, and do not endeavour to attain to the spiritual Knowledge of the Scriptures. Neither do they hear Christ in the Gospel, crying, The Flesh profiteth nothing; 'Tis the Spirit that quickeneth; and, we know because the Law is spiritual, and not Carnal; and SPIRITUAL THINGS SHOULD BE COMPARED WITH SPIRITUAL. God was anciently worshipped in the Mount, but now the Father of Spirits will be worshipped in Spirit. And he subjoins, therefore I would not have you who are endued with a happy Genius, to rest in the barren Letter, but to hasten to the more PROFOUND MYSTERIES, and to your own unwearied Industry to join frequent and fervent PRAYER, until he that has the KEY of David, open you the Book, who shuts and no body can open the ARCANNA of the FATHER, which none knows but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal them. Shew me such Criticks now a days, and I'll be the first that shall be ready to shew them all possible Honour and Respect.

XXIV. But if any Critick reject and despise the efficient Cause it self, the Power, the Essence, and the Center of all solid Good, or, of all Realities, the adorable Spirit of God, and his Internal Operations and secret Meanings, and thereby shew himself a declared Enemy to all Mystical or Spiritual Knowledge; if he dislike the very Ideas of such Realities, and under Pretence of an aversion to Metaphysical or Platonical Ideas, endeavour to ridicule and discredit them; if he cannot so much as bear with the shadows of such things, whereby in a more gross and figurative manner, their essential Dignity is represented; and consequently if he ridicule all Allegorical Theology; if moreover he be angry with all those, however venerable for their Antiquity, or how conspicuous soever for their Sanctity, who have praised and recommended such things; so that all that remains for him to please himself with, is only to make his Remarks upon the Bark, and to Expound the Letter without the Spirit, without the Intellectual Ideas thereof, and even without the proper Allegorical explications; if such a one, I say, who, setting aside all these things, expounds the Scriptures literally only, and according

XXIV. In what Sense Criticks and Critical Learning are undervalued.

Letter I. to Grammatical, Critical, Pelagian, and Heathen Ideas, such as those of *Homer, Virgil, Horace and Ovid*, which fall infinitely short of *Plato's* Ideas; and that in so rash a manner, that whatever does not suit with his Critical Capacity, he expunges out of the Scriptures, and condemns such Mysteries as he does not understand, and then imposes his own Grammatical, Critical and Heathenish Interpretations, under the Name of *Sacred Observations, Questions and Annotations*, and the like, because forsooth the external matter, or the Bark and the Words are taken from the Holy Scriptures; such an one I will convince not by Clamour, but by Demonstration, as I have done (a) in another Place, that all his vain Critical Learning is both insufficient and absurd. But if they cannot yet see the force of my Demonstrations; I will shew them by more gross Similitudes, that they act as vainly and ridiculously; as if any one among the *Israelites* of old, who had a right to partake of any Sacrifice, and to give thereof to others, should have left the inward Substance, and taken the Skin and Hair, and Excrements only, and covered and anointed himself therewith, and then run about the Streets, crying, *A Holy Sacrifice! A Sacred Unction! A Holy Meat Offering!* That is, they were taken from the Sacred Victim in the same manner as our Criticks use to take their *Sacred Observations* from the Holy Scriptures, with which they feed themselves and others, much after the manner that they do Swine with Bran, leaving the Substance and the Flower of the Corn, as if it was nothing but meer insignificant Dust, wholly untouched.

(a) *Oeconomy*,
Vol. III.
Chap. 14.

Some Particular Instances
of Mr. Le

But to be more Particular.

XXV. The first Instance; that I promise to Demonstrate things, provided the Reader has Faith.

(b) Pag. 414.
415.

XXV. In the Account you give of me in your *Bibliothèque Universelle*, where you introduce me in the *Oeconomy*, promising to prove what I advance in *Theology, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Physics, Ethics and Politics*, by Demonstrations as Plain and Evident as any in *Geometry*; you add, That I do not expect that the force of such Demonstrations will be understood by those Readers who shall view them only by the Light of Human Reason; that 'tis absolutely necessary that they bring somewhat of FAITH along with them, without which I affirm, they will

Letter I.

will understand nothing of them; and, that I believe that even the unlearned will be able to understand every thing that I have advanced, except some few things in the first and second Book, provided they will give but Attention, and RECEIVE the Truths which I promise to teach them with FAITH. Now they that either do not know me, or dare not suspect you to be one of those that industriously set themselves to invent Stories the better to set off their own Wit, will hardly be able to forbear Laughing, when they hear, that I undertake to Demonstrate certain Truths, provided my Demonstrations be received with Faith. But if there be any who do not look upon me as the greatest Blockhead in Nature, but rather think that I understand what Demonstration is as well as you, and possibly as well as any other; if they observe that from the beginning of the work, I suppose my Reader to be a meer Sceptick; they will no longer doubt but that you have very grossly misrepresented me, and when they shall see in the Series of the Work, that I draw no conclusions but what were Implicirely contained in, and which naturally flowed from my Principles (which is to Demonstrate;) and that when my Principles themselves are not at first sight sufficiently clear and evident, I deduce them from others, as I do these from others again, and so on, until I bring them down to such first Principles as admit of no Dispute (which many own they have observed in my Writings;) I say, after they have observed these things, they will wonder to see that you have so little Prudence, and so great an Inclination to Cavil, as for the sake of such a senseless Jest, to give so clear a Proof, either of your Ignorance or Partiality. But the Crime, it seems, is that I named and commended Faith, in order to perceive and understand things Intellectual! I'll explain the matter in a few Words. We sometimes meet with Demonstrations, the force whereof many, and even such as in other respects are very Ingenious Men, cannot by any means comprehend. For instance, Monsieur des Cartes in some of his Writings did certainly Demonstrate the Immateriality of the Soul, and the Existence of God; and yet some very learned Geometricians have (a) (a) Obj. VI. acknowledged that though they had often and attentively read his Demonstrations, they could never see the force of them. At this Day there are some Cartesianes, and others, who do not understand the Demonstrations about the Liberty of God concerning things indifferent,

This Calumny refuted.

Letter I. indifferent, and about his sufficiency, although they naturally flow from this Principle, that God is an infinitely perfect Being, and consequently that he does not in the least stand in need of any other besides himself; and therefore that he alone is self-sufficient; so that if he has the Ideas of other things, and made them, it was a matter wholly indifferent to him to think of them and to make them; and consequently, that he himself was first indifferent as to such things: And yet these things they do not comprehend. Who does not understand these Principles, that God cannot deny himself and his own Properties, neither inwardly within himself, nor by any external Word or Act? But how few are there, who see that it Necessarily and Demonstratively follows from thence, that the Works of God have no tendency to Annihilation, and that they are not inactive, dark, contrary to, destructive of, and made to Torment one another; and consequently that they are Permanent, Active, Luminous, Harmonious, Happy and Glorious; and that therefore the World was not made in that disorderly and unhappy State in which we see it at present; but that all the present Evils and Miseries which we observe therein, proceeds from some sinful and degenerate Author? Now 'tis evident that many do not apprehend the force of these Demonstrations, with the same ease and clearness that they Conceive and are Convinced that God cannot Lie. And the same thing may happen still the more, according as the Truths which we undertake to Demonstrate are at a greater distance from their first Principles, and as they are more shocking and contrary to the Prejudices of Education. What Remedy then shall we make use of to assist Reason to see and perceive the force of such Demonstrations? Some prescribe Attention: and so do I. But they, of whom we speak, say that they did and still do apply themselves with all possible Attention; but that nevertheless they cannot apprehend the force of such Demonstrations. What can they do more? Some prescribe other means: What I would offer is this. I would have the Reader not to give his Mind to contemplate Reason only, but to follow it also; that is, that he would practice those things which his Reason tells him he ought to do, before he proceed to other Demonstrations. For Example, If any one had really a Mind to understand any intricate Mathematical Demonstration, the only way would

would be to take a Scale and Compasses, or Pen and Ink, and Delineate it upon Paper, or trace it in some other Characters, through all its several Steps, as he reads it; otherwise, without some such Practical means as this, he will quickly lose the Thread, or not rightly apprehend the force of the Demonstration. The Case is the same as to Intellectual and Spiritual Matters: After one is convinced by Reason, or by any other means, that there is a God, and that he is the Omnipotent and Bountiful Author of all Good, and of all Light; the first thing that Reason dictates for him to do, in order to prepare and fit him to go on to other things, is heartily to praise God, and to give him Thanks, and in an humble confidence that he will hear him, to wait and pray for his good and luminous Operations in and upon his Heart. Either I am wholly mistaken in my self, or this is really and truly the Case. My Reason shews me beyond any possibility of doubt, that I ought to desire Light and whatever is Good, and that from God, and in my Soul; because he is the Author of Light, and of every thing that is Good, and I on the other side am his Handy-work, and my Soul the subject made and adapted to receive his Light; and that I ought to do so with a Believing Mind, because God is Benevolent and Omnipotent. Now this Disposition of Soul, whereby she sincerely Offers and Trusts herself into the Hands of God, desiring him and his Light, or, *That recourse and shelter which a thankful and believing Soul, breathing after God, the Fountain of all Goodness, takes in him*, is what I called FAITH; which Faith, or humble Disposition of the Soul, resigning and entrusting itself wholly into the Hands of God, does not produce Philosophical or Ideal and Artificial Demonstrations; but the Faculties of the Soul, and Reason itself, are only thereby more and more resigned and exposed to the powerful Operations, and to the sweet Influences of God; who in consequence thereof enlivens, invigorates and enables and makes them fit afterwards to perform their several Functions in the easiest and best manner, and to receive the true Ideas of things Intellectual, either by immediate Divine Illumination, or by the help of such Light to form, conceive, examine and weigh what is in such Ideas, and what necessarily follows from them: That is, by this means, a Soul is made capable of perceiving and feeling the force of Intellectual

Letter I.

* Pref. to the
Oeconomy.

lectual Demonstrations. Now, good Mr. Critick, pray tell me whether I have explained my self to your Capacity, or no? Do these Things in your Language import the same Thing as, *to promise Demonstrations provided one will receive them with Faith*, or in case he will joyn but a little Faith to them? Or did I exprels my self there so obscurely that an attentive Reader could not find out my meaning? As if I had not expressly said, ** We approach to God by the Spirit of Faith; whence after that we are made conformable to him in the bottom of our Soul, our Mind and Reason, and all our Faculties are rendred able and fit, every one in their degree, to EXPRESS (or to Excite in us Ideally) the Truths, the Characters or Representations of all God's wonderful Works, and of all those Things that are in himself, and in his own Divine Arbitrary Conception; so that the ACTIVITY of REASON imperceptibly acquires a bent or aptitude to REPRESENT the manner how God conceived and made all Things. That there is in us a FACULTY, which is capable of REPRESENTING and expressing most CLEARLY and EASILY THE IDEAS and WORKS of GOD, and of SEEING their REASONS and Beauties; which Faculty, when it approaches to God, it receives by the Light of Faith (or by the Light which God imparts to a Soul that trusts in and resigns itself to him) a DISPOSITION to PERCEIVE his TRUTHS and his WORKS, and much more to the same purpose. From all which its evident that I shewed plainly enough, how Faith, or a sincere and faithful approach to God, shining and discovering himself in the Soul, disposes and enables the activity of Reason to excite in itself Ideas conformable to the Ideas in God, and to the Things themselves, and to understand the Truths and Reasons of Things. But this is Anti-Pelagian, and therefore what you hate, as is that likewise which I expressly observed there, that the Pelagians, and the literal Criticks, and those that deny the Operations of God in the Soul, are therefore unfit and incapable of perceiving Things Intellectual, because their Reason is Sick, clouded and wholly corrupted. Now because you might possibly think that these Things touched you, was it therefore necessary that, for Revenge sake, you should pervert and ridicule my Sense and Words, which if rightly understood, are clear and Orthodox, and contain nothing but very excellent and wholesome Precepts? Has not St. Paul be-*
fore

fore me, observed that the Reason why the Philosophers of the World were encompassed with *Darkness*, and became *vain* in their *Imaginations*, is this, because that *when they knew God, they Glorified him not as God*, as the Author of Light and of every good Thing, to whom they ought to have had recourse; and because they were ungrateful, and vainly trusted and relied upon *their own Reasonings*, deserting their *Blessed Creator*? Would to God that every Philosopher would submit his Reason to be cured and illuminated by this Divine Faith; and that every Writer had such a share of Human Faith or Integrity, as might enable him to relate the Words or Actions of Others Impartially!

XXVI. With the like Fidelity, and in a Jocular and Scornful way you say, * *That my Metaphysicks cannot be perfectly understood in many Places, unless one be admitted into the Divine Darkness, and into the Contemplation of the Principle of God.* Whereas you ought to have said that my Metaphysicks explain some divine Things, which may indeed be well conceiv'd Ideally, but which none can sensibly Experience in himself, unless God, who is our Principle, discover himself to him after a manner which to us is now dark and obscure; which, as I observ'd by the by, is what the Mylticks mean by that Expression, *To be admitted into the Divine Darkness, and into the Contemplation of their Principle* (not the Principle of God, as you erroneously take it.) But all this is nothing but what other Metaphysicians have said, or much to the same purpose. For when, for instance, they demonstrate, that Man's greatest Felicity consists in the Contemplation of God; this indeed is what every Body sufficiently comprehends; but yet all Men must undoubtedly acknowledge, that none can actually enjoy and possess that Happiness without the supernatural Help and Operation of God, which to us in this state is yet dark and obscure. Thus again, in another Book, I have employed a whole Chapter about the Divine *Eternity*, and that which we partake from thence, the force of which Demonstrations is indeed easily perceiv'd *Ideally*, but the lively Experience of the Thing itself cannot be communicated to us, as I there observ'd, *Unless it please the Supreme Mind, which sustains us, to joyn himself to us according to the Plenitude or full Extent of our Thought.* Now tho' the short Line of our Experience cannot Fathom these Things,

Letter I.

Rom. 1.

XXVI. The

Second Instance;

* Biblioth.

Pag. 418.

That my Metaphysicks are unintelligible.

Refuted.

† Cogit. Rational.

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Things, yet some Great and Ingenious Men have set so high a value upon that Chapter, that they prefer it to all the rest of the Book, and some have got it even by Heart. But these were such Men as were persuaded that Divine Things, instead of being ridicul'd and banter'd, ought to be studied with Reverence and Attention.

XXVII. Third Instance;

* Biblioth.

Pag. 427.

He misrepresents Mr. Poirer's Notion of Faith.

XXVII. It will also undoubtedly appear ridiculous to many as you * tell it, viz. That I endeavour to prove, *That Faith is God himself*. But this would not have appeared so absurd if you had fairly told your Readers, That according to my Notion Faith may be consider'd either on the part of Man, as he contributes something to it which God requires of him, and in this Sense Faith is a fiducial surrender or resignation of all our Faculties, of the Desire, the Understanding, the Will and Acquiescence to God himself: Or that it may be likewise consider'd on the part of God, as he operates in the Faculties of a Man that resigns himself to him with a filial confidence, and produces his Light, or insinuates himself, and his Love into them; so that in this Sense, that Faith which is from God, is God himself, irradiating and producing Light, Love and Tranquility in the Soul; and in this respect God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, are said to be in, to dwell in, and to live in Man by Faith; and that this Faith is not the Work of Man: Now these Things, as they are self-evident, so neither will they appear absurd to any intelligent Person, when the matter is fairly stated to him.

XXVIII. A

Fourth In-

stance; He

explains Mr.

Poirer's Noti-

on of Faculties

but in part.

(a) Oecon.

Creat. chap.

6. §. 19.

(b) Ibid. §.

22.

(c) Biblioth.

Pag. 422.

XXVIII. I gave two Definitions of Faculties, one of the (a) Thing, which I said wanted an *Explication*, for as much as it expresses the Nature of the Thing; the other of the Name, that every one might know what I mean by the Word Faculty, and (b) afterwards I tell my Readers that to me the Word Faculty is the same Thing as a *Power of doing or acting*; or more generally, that 'tis a *Capacity of acting and receiving or suffering*. But you, (c) after you have given the Reader hopes, that I would shew what a Faculty is, and in what Sense the Word is to be taken, omit the nominal Definition, which is accommodated to every Capacity, and produce only the other, which without its Explication (which follows there) must needs appear very obscure; that so your Readers being put in hopes of a clear Definition, and then finding

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finding all of a sudden nothing but obscurity, may find matter to laugh at; much after the same manner as your Juglers, who by slight of Hand convey some Things out of Sight, and then all of a sudden shew something else, to amuse and please those that look on. And as such Buffoons often repeat those Tricks which they think will be most taking with the Croud; even so you also do often and unexpectedly bring out from behind the Scene something Mystical; but you happen to do it so often and so awkwardly, that to an indifferent observer your management cannot but appear very nauseous and ridiculous.

XXIX. In the same ludicrous manner, after you have prepared your Readers to hear something serious and sublime of me about the Divinity of the Soul, all of a sudden you * introduce me as asking my self by Name, and with the Appellation of Sir; and then presently, omitting my self, Answering others, and that without being asked, as if they had in that interim sprung up like Mushrooms. Now there are such ridiculous Suggestions, that he that peruses my Writings will find that I have not given the least occasion for them; I only mention a Difficulty as proposed by my Readers to themselves; and to shew how absurd it is, I give the same Answer as † *Claubergius* did, thinking it deserved no other. 'Tis strange, sure, that Ingenious Men should be so blinded and led away by Prejudice and Passion, as not to see that by such little Patchings and Prevarications, all that they can do is only to shew how Ingenious they are at contriving and piecing together a Fools-Coat.

XXX. But then sometimes you mix some serious Things, and give pretty fair accounts of others, that so your Readers being for some little time employed about Grave Matters, may the better relish your Mystical Jest, which every now and then recur with you: Thus after having premised one, you go on next to || treat more seriously of the Holy Trinity, namely, to help out the *Socinians*, against whom you say I have exclaimed, as if they denied the Sacred Trinity in that Sense that I explained it, which you in their Name deny. Let us see then, and, since you are their Advocate, try if you can make them acknowledge the following particulars, which contain my Sense of the matter. 1. That there is actually in the Eternal Deity an adorable Trinity, which the Holy Scriptures express by the Terms of the Father, the Son or the Word,

XXIX. A Fifth Instance; He endeavours to ridicule what I had said about the Nature of the Soul.

* Biblioth. Pag. 428.

† In Exercit. de Deo.

XXX. A Sixth Instance; He maintains that the *Socinians* do not deny the Trinity in that Sense that I explained it in.

|| Biblioth. Pag. 430.

The Truth of this Allegation enquir'd into.

and

Letter I.

*Reasons why
Things are
sometimes re-
vealed ob-
scurely.*

*And why Men
refuse to be-
lieve Myſteries.*

and the Holy Ghoſt. 2. That the Trinity, as well as every Thing eſſe in God, is incomprehenſible to our finite Underſtanding; but that beſides all thoſe infinite and innumerable Realities in the Deity which we do not comprehend; one of them, as near as our narrow and finite Capacity can conceive is this, That the Father is the deſire of enjoying himſelf eſſential to the Deity; That the Son is the Living Image and Light of the Deity; and that the Holy Spirit is the eſſential Love, Acquieſcence and Joy, or the ineffable Complacency of the Father in the Son. If the *Socinians* ſcruple to own theſe Things, they thereby ſhew that their Sentiments differ from mine about the Holy Trinity. But if they do admit theſe Things, then I Congratulate you and them upon it: Nor ought they therefore to be looked upon as wholly Innocent or Excuseable, if they ſhould alledge that they only denied the Holy Trinity before, becauſe no Body had clearly enough explained it to them; and which if they had ſeen it propoſed in this manner, they would not have denied. Such an excuſe, I ſay, is vain and frivolous. For oftentimes God reveals ſome things concerning himſelf or his Works, more obſcurely to Men, as well that we may ſhew him the ſame Honour and Reſpect which we pay to Men of Probity, whom we believe in Things that we have not ſeen; as that being Conſcious of the narrowneſs of our Underſtanding, and diſſident of our ſelves, we may by continual Humility bridle our Luxuriant Reaſon, and apply to him for his Divine Light and Help to enable us to underſtand ſuch Things, as far as is neceſſary for our Salvation. Now, if ſome from a Principle of blind Pride will not *firſt*, addreſs themſelves to God, and implore his Divine Light and Help; but Laughing at ſuch Things as Fanatical Principles, and boldly truſting to their own Underſtanding as ſelf-ſufficient, do therefore *ſecondly*, reſuſe to admit what God reveals, becauſe it appears repugnant to their wretched Underſtanding, endeavouring to comprehend it by their own weak ſtrength; and if *thirdly*, they preſume to ſubſtitute the Works of their own Corrupted Underſtanding, the Creatures for Creator (as the *Socinians* do, who are guilty of all theſe three, placing the Creatures or the Created gifts of God in the room of the Holy Spirit) would they therefore be excuſeable, if, when God ſhould afterwards tell them, behold thoſe Things which out of Pride you will not aſk of my Grace; thoſe Things relating

relating to me which you therefore reject, because your Proud, and as you think self-sufficient Understanding, which I was willing to humble and compel to seek my help, cannot comprehend them; and finally those Things in whose Place you have substituted the Creatures; they are even such, that if they be explained to you in another manner, and in other Terms, you will find your self so fully convinced of the Truth of them, as many others are already, that it will be impossible for you to reject or doubt of them any more: Such Persons, I say, if they should at last believe these Things, will they therefore be excusable from the guilt of Pride, Incredulity, and either of Idolatry or Injustice against God and Divine Things, in whose Place they set up meer Creatures? Judge you, Sir, in this Case, and apply it to the Socinians, whose first and chiefest Crime is not so much in that they deny several Mysteries, as in this, that dissembling and even denying their own Corruption, and depending wholly upon the Strength of their own Corrupted Reason, they look and seek for Help and Light from that, and not from the Gracious Light and Operation of God:

XXXI. I am not much troubled at what you say, when you * affirm that my Discourse about Liberty is either partly Mytical (that is, either what you do not understand, or do not like because it makes against Pelagianism) or partly what has been said by others long since. It was sometimes objected to Des Cartes, that 'twas no such new Thing to say, that he thinks; and that every Body knew and said the same Thing long before him. He Answered that it was true indeed; but that none before him had observed that that was the first Principle of all Philosophy; that from thence every Thing else might be deduced; and that he had first done it. Those that will attentively read my Work, will see that whatever regards Grace, Predestination, the Justice of God, or any other of his Dealings with Men, is easily and naturally deduced and accounted for from my Explication of Liberty; That what † others had said upon those and the like Heads, are more general, more obscure, and not so clearly deduced, and therefore have proved almost wholly ineffectual for those Ends: On the contrary I have been more particular, and have by the help of my Principles explained and solved such Difficulties as have been looked upon by others as inexplicable. And I

will

Letter I.

None of which can excuse any one for not believing them; But on the contrary condemn him.

XXXI. A Seventh Instance: That what is said about Liberty is either Mytical, or what others have said before.

*Bibl. p. 433.

† See Vossi. Hist. Pelag. Lib. 3. Part. 1. Thef. 2. Pag. 293.

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will be bold to say, that if others had explained Liberty in that Sense that I have done, neither *Pelagianism*, nor any other Capital Heresy about Grace could ever have been maintained by any but the most Profligate of Mankind. These Things your Treatment forces me to declare, and at the same to desire you, because you so often tell me that what I say has been said before by others, to look into your own Writings, and consider, that if all that you have stolen from others without so much as mentioning their Names was taken away, whether *Aesop's* Fable of the Crow, might not in a great measure be applied to your self.

XXXII. *The Eighth Instance ; That Man before the Fall could form a Body like his own.*
* Biblioth.
Pag. 435.
† Ibid. Pag. 426.

XXXII. I know not whence you should affirm, * that Man before the Fall, could, in my Opinion, by the Power of his Imagination form another Body like unto his own : When yet my meaning is, that the Imagination only concurs to such a Formation but in part and as a concomitant Cause. I am also in doubt whether it was not to excite Laughter in your Readers (because otherwise you ridicule all Familiarity with God) that you say † I maintain, *That 'tis but Labour in vain to endeavour to penetrate into Nature, without first recovering a Familiarity with God ; and that in order to that 'tis necessary to know the Internal Things of the Deity.* Surely the internal Things of the Deity, his Thoughts and Ideas are the original Patterns and efficient Causes of all Things ; and therefore in order to know Things made by their Causes, or to discover the Causes of Things, there is no other way but to look for them in God : Now that none can possibly discover them, unless God himself is pleased to communicate them to him, is so evident that it needs no Proof.

XXXIII. *A Ninth Instance ; That I make use of the Lives of some Saints in explaining Things.*
‖ Biblioth.
Pag. 436.

XXXIII. When you alledge ‖ that I describe the Primitive Glories of the Creation from the Life and Visions of *St. Teresa*, in order to make such Things appear ridiculous to Protestants and Philosophers ; you omit to mention that I deduced the same Thing before from God's Attributes, and established it upon several Good Reasons, and then confirm'd it from eight or ten Places of Scripture, to all which, for Illustration sake, I added the Words of *St. Teresa*, thinking it much better to illustrate Divine Things by the Testimony of such a Pious Soul, than with you to attempt to explain the Holy Scriptures from *Virgil*, and *Horace*, *Martial*, and *Ovid*, and such like Authors, which

you and other Criticks usually consult upon such occasions as so many Oracles.

Letter I.

XXXIV. Having by these and the like Methods, either perverted the Sense, or curtailed the Explications given in my Writings as well as those of others, and being, I suppose, conscious of your guilt in both these Respects, in an Admonition prefixed to the fifth Tome of your *Bibliosheque*, you attempt (by several frivolous Excuses) to anticipate the Complaints, which you could not but see that such gross Frauds would bring upon you. Thus, for instance, as to the first, you pretend that possibly in many places you might not perfectly apprehend the meaning of some Authors, because they make use of *confused Ideas* and *Improper Expressions*; or because of their *long Parentheses* and *incoherent Reasonings*; or because they often use *Equivocal Expressions*, and are sometimes *Ignorant* of their own *Language*; but that these are not the true Reasons why you have mistaken and misrepresented the Sense of my Writings (as well as that of some others) is evident in that many others of equal or better Judgment and Penetration than your self, have read and understood, and found great satisfaction in them, without ever raising such Objections against them; and because you have also exposed and misrepresented others, who are allowed to be Masters of a most clear and eloquent Expression; so that the Reason why you treat me and others in such a manner, cannot be so much those which you assign, as that I and those Authors whom you traduce, are adversaries to the Socinian Socinian Errors; witness the Character you give of that excellent and elegant Discourse of the Bishop of Meaux, concerning the Holy Trinity, which as to the manner you call a (a) sound of empty Words, and as to the matter, a heap of Chimeras. I have already pointed out other more probable Causes, both general and particular, why you act in this manner, as also the Reason why many things seem obscure to you, when I told you, that those who dissembling the Corruption of their own Reason, and trusting to their own Strength, will neither turn to God, nor implore his internal help, are not at all in a capacity to perceive and understand things Spiritual. But if, as you confess, you did not rightly understand such matters, why then did not you leave them to your Colleague to manage? May we not suspect that you was afraid he would not sufficiently Ridicule, but rather

XXXIV. Mr. Le Clerc's Reasons why he may have mistaken other Men's Writings:

Are not the true Reasons why he Misrepresents them.

The true Reason is because they oppose the Socinian Doctrines.

(a) Entret. p. 302.

Other Reasons also assigned.

Letter I.

XXXV. Mr.
Le Clerc's
Plea for sup-
pressing and
curtailing se-
veral matters
Material
in other
Mens Writ-
ings,

Refused.

(a) Entretiens,
p. 191,
& 204.

ther Commend, what you hated as contrary to your Erroneous Opinions? Or if you found any Difficulties or obscure Places toward the beginning of my Work, why did you not take my Advice, and begin and read the last Books first?

XXXV. As to the second, namely your suppressing several things in your Accounts, which had you mentioned them, would have set matters in a fair and clear Light. You alledge, as an excuse, the narrow compass that you was confined to; and that no body will have any just occasion to complain of you on that score; *But those of an Inferiour Rank among the Learned, and such as having read but little, and being but ill acquainted with the Affairs of the World, entertain some singular and uncommon Opinions, and look upon their own Fancies and Inventions as the certain effects of a Divine Inspiration.* Now though all these things were true, yet they are nothing to the purpose; for if you pretend to give an Account of such Persons, or their Writings, you ought in justice to quote their Words as faithfully as those of the most learned Criticks, who have read every thing except what they ought to read, and who know every thing except what they ought to know; and finally, who called their own Socinian Errors, and even the most pernicious of them, *(a) Lights which God has bestowed upon them, and admirable means which the Providence of God makes use of to reclaim others from Errors.* As to what you insinuate of me, that I am but of an inferiour form among the Learned, I am not only not at all displeased with it; but I truly and sincerely acknowledge and confess that I have scarce yet learned as I ought, the true Elements of solid Knowledge; all my Ambition is most earnestly to beseech God, that he would, out of his great Mercy, and by the Assistance of his Grace, prepare and receive me into his School to teach me the same. And as to your Learning, which in your Opinion is beyond all exception, I do not indeed envy you, nor is it needful that I should give my Opinion of it in this place; I only pray that God would keep me and all good Men from ever being tainted therewith. What Books I shall read, or what worldly Affairs 'tis fit for me to know, I shall scarce enquire of those Criticks, who are yet ignorant themselves in this, that 'tis better much to read a few solid and instructive Books; to preserve a few Pearls and precious Stones; and to look inwardly into
the

Letter I.

The secret Recesses of the Soul, and there to seek for true and solid Knowledge, than to gather infinite heaps of trash and Rubbish, and be unavoidably reduced to the necessity either of being smothered with the Dust, or starved upon the Husks. If you had observed this Rule, you would have preferred the small (but golden) Treatises of *Herman Herbert*, the first Founder of your Sect, before all the great *Episcopius's* and *Circulæus's*, the illustrious *Hammond's*, the incomparable *Grotius's*, the Voluminous Collections of the *Fratres Poloni*, and innumerable others of the same kind: But as great a Reader as you are, I cannot perceive that you have so much as ever seen any of that good Man's Writings; though 'twas from him that the first Remonstrants took all that was good among them; nay, you seem not only not to know this admirable Man, and to be forgetful of your own Original, but even most of your way now-a-days have deserted him, and maintain Notions and Doctrines quite contrary to his Divine Writings and Principles. Had you, *Sir*, who seem to glory in the extent of your Knowledge, as if nothing, how foreign soever, had escaped you; while at the same time you seem to slight and despise the nearest, the chiefest and most necessary Things, and such as relate even to your own Party; had you, I say, read and digested this Author's Writings (a) alone, and let alone all others, you would have had no Reason to repent, and might now have been able to see, that one may profit more by carefully reading one good Author, than by being at the pains to read a thousand trifling ones: For as that Ground, which has every Day new Seed cast into it, can never produce a good Crop; so a Soul which is daily distracted with an infinite variety of trifling Matters, can never improve to any purpose in solid Knowledge: This is only to be acquire'd by little Reading, frequent Meditation, earnest Prayer, assiduous Exercise, and by withdrawing and separating ourselves from the vain Objects and Ideas of the World. It is enough for a Scholar, in this School, to know of the World, (b) *That all that is therein, is the Lust of the Flesh, and the lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life*, and that all such things perish with those that esteem and lust after them, while he that studies aright to know nothing but God and himself in the Spirit of *Christ*, shall abide for ever, although for the present he be ridiculed and laughed at by the

(a) *Herman Herbert.*(b) *1 John, c. 2. v. 16.*

Letter I.

worldly wife, who coveting to have their Minds filled and puffed up with the vain Air of Empty, Perishable and Chymical Trifles, mock at those who affirm, that nothing can fill or satisfy them, but the Eternal Spirit of *Christ* himself, as Mad-Men or Enthusiasts.

XXXVI. His Charge of Enthusiasm.

XXXVI. Thus in your sixth Tome, with much satisfaction, you take notice how a certain Disputant calls me an Enthusiast, and in the Index, again, you are sure not to forget to mention *Poiret the Enthusiast Philosopher*. But, according to your usual Fidelity, in your Quotations, you omit mentioning the Answer of his Antagonist (though you give an Account likewise of the Contents of his Book) who told him, That in Philosophical Matters (about which the Controversy was) *Poiret* alone was preferable to Ten such as he: But this would have taken away the Reproach of Philosophical Enthusiasm, which you would so fain fix upon me; it would have frustrated the end which you proposed to your self in publishing that Character of me, which could be nothing else but to make the World slight and despise my Writings under that Notion. Should I take the pains to Collect all the fine Epithets that others have bestowed upon you, how many Pages might not I fill with those Encomiums? But I look upon it as a sign of a mean Soul to rake into such a Dunghill, or to endeavour by such means to blast any Man's Reputation. But to shew you how little Truth there is in your borrowed Reflexion, I here publicly Challenge you to shew me so much as one that has writ so clearly and so strongly against Enthusiasm in Philosophy, and against Fanatical Enthusiasm in Theology, as I have done. You cannot but know that some Philosophers, especially of the Moderns, have endeavoured to maintain that every Natural Act is the immediate Act of God; that Human Reason and its Ideas; yea, that Extension and Figures perceived by the Eye, is God himself, his essential Light, and his very Substance; and that by these we are admitted into a Familiarity with God, and maintain a sweet Intercourse with him, with many other things of the like Nature, which they have writ largely upon and have published their Meditations to the World, and which deserve rightly enough to be called Philosophical Enthusiasm: These things, I say, you know, and also that I have fully Answered and Re-

Answered.

And is Challenged to name any one that has writ so clearly against Enthusiasm as Mr. *Poiret* has done.

Both as to Philosophy,

refuted

Letter I.

futed them in the first Book of my Oeconomy, which you have read, and also in the Preliminary Dissertation to my *Cogitations* of God; where I have clearly Demonstrated, that Reason (especially as 'tis active) and the Corporeal Senses, can never rise so high as to have any familiarity or intercourse with God himself; but only with his Effects, his Pictures and Images, which are of the created kind; and in the Ninth Chapter of the *Oeconomy of the Co-operation*, I have so clearly vindicated Theology from the Imputation of Fanatical Enthusiasm, that I have evidently Demonstrated, that those that are not perfectly dead to themselves, and to all the Lusts and Propensions of their corrupt Nature, are so far from having any Reason to boast of the Spirit of *Christ* dwelling and reigning in them, that they are not yet capable of receiving him. But that we ought not by Purification to aspire after the same, that true Christians, that is, those that have already received of God the Gifts, the Principles and the Blessings of Divine Faith, Hope and Charity, and of all other solid Christian Vertues, that they, I say, cannot truly and in a proper way be made more and more Partakers of the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*; and finally, that they are not the Temples, the Tabernacles, the Dwelling-Places of *GOD*, of *CHRIST*, and of the HOLY SPIRIT, who Dwells, Abides, Lives, Acts, Reigns and Teaches in them, so that at last they abound, and are filled with all the fulness of God; these things, I say, (which you and the Modern Pelagians and Socinians deny and ridicule) which are the express Words and sacred Promises of God in the Holy Scripture, I cannot without Impiety, I no where have, and I hope never shall deny them. And if this be what by way of Derision you call Enthusiasm; if this be what you reproach me with under that Character; because *Christ* was exposed to the shameful Death of the Cross, with the Mock Title of a King, I shall not therefore the less acknowledge and receive him as a Lord and King, ruling and governing by his Spirit in the Souls of Men; nor will I be ashamed openly to acknowledge that I most earnestly pray, and firmly hope for the Gift of his Spirit to quicken, actuate and govern me in the way everlasting. Yea, Lord, in thee have I hoped; let me not be confounded for ever: Let thy mercy come upon me, O Lord; thy Salvation according to thy word, and I will put to silence those that reproach me with evil words;

And Theology.

Who ought not to boast of the Spirit of Christ, And who they are that truly aspire after the same.

Spiritual Religion mistaken for Enthusiasm,

and maintain'd against all the Artifices of mistaken Men,

Letter I.

Good return'd
for Evil.

That we ought
to judge
charitably of
others.

The Reason
why?

words; because I have trusted in thy words. Let me rejoice in thy Salvation, and let thy good Spirit of Power sustain me; and then I shall not be ashamed if I be ranked, by vain Men, among Fanaticks; nor if they look upon my Writings as the Productions of Enthusiasm. O may it please the Divine Majesty, that as the Heavens, so likewise the Earth may be filled with such Enthusiasts, that so the will of God may be done in Earth as it is in Heaven; and that the new Jerusalem may Descend to us from Heaven prepared with the Gifts of the Spirit of Christ, as a Bride adorn'd for the Bridegroom; and that God may pitch his Tabernacle among Men, and dwell with them, so that they may be his People and be their God, their God with them, and all in all! This happy State, Sir, I heartily wish, notwithstanding all you have done to make me appear Ridiculous to others; you may at last attain to. I bear no Malice in my Heart; for how ill so ever you have recompensed my Services, yet 'tis well known (I speak the Truth and Lie not) that upon several occasions I have often so sent'd and mitigated the Minds of some Good Men, who had but a very mean Opinion of you, because they thought you had treated some Divine and Spiritual Matters in too bold and irreverent a manner. I urged that we ought not to load every one with all the ill Consequences which naturally flow, or may be deduced, from the Principles that he espouses; and that therefore, for Example, if some did not acknowledge the Grace of God, and the internal Operations of his Spirit; if they thought that God did not immediately work in us to will and to do; if they thought that the Holy Spirit of Christ was not actually given to all the Members of his Body, (that is, to all true Christians) and that it neither communicated Life, nor produced any of its Operations in them; I say, I alledged, that though some might hold such Notions, and thereby did what in them lay to banish God and his Spirit from them, yet it did not follow that they denied the Existence of either; and that to deny the Operation of God and his Spirit in us, is not a thing peculiar to them, but even common to all others, who acknowledging the thing in Words and in their Judgment, and at the same time following the Lusts of their own Inclinations, do in effect reject the gracious Presence and Operations of the Holy Spirit of God; which is what may be called practical Pelagianism and Atheism, a thing

a thing so common that but few can plead exception from it. So that upon the whole, and even for this very Reason, it becomes us to look with a more compassionate regard upon those that are fallen into Errors then is usual; seeing what they deny in Theory only, the same do we all in our Practice, and are therefore before the impartial Tribunal of God so much the more inexcusable than they, as we know more. These things I mention, lest the laying open the Errors of others should raise Hatred and Contempt against them, rather than Christian Compassion, and their own Amendment; which last I heartily wish may be your Case. And the better to convince you and the World how much you stand in need of both, what little stress ought to be laid upon your Testimony in matters which either do not agree with, or which contradict your Notions, and that no body ought to be prevailed upon to forbear reading the Writings of others upon your Character; I shall here by way of Supplement, to what I have observed with relation to my own Writings give a few Instances of your Candor in representing the Writings and Sentiments of some other Illustrious Men, both Ancient and Modern.

other Authors both Ancient and Modern.

I shall begin with the Moderns.

XXXVII. Upon opening your Book by chance at the Bookseller's-Shop, I observed the following Instances, which I conceive, without any further Enquiry, will be sufficient to caution others how they rely upon your Testimony.

1. A certain worthy Person writ a Book of *The Truth of the Christian Religion*, in so elegant a Style, and in so clear a Method, that if you have not given a faithful Account thereof, you cannot plead obscurity or ambiguity in his Expression, as you have done to others; and he has handled his Subject with that Moderation, and with such Strength of Argument, that nothing but a certain Moroseness in your Temper, or the manifest difference between your Sentiments and his, could have prevailed with you alone to deny him that Applause which all others allow to be his due. This Gentleman, however you have ventured, without any Provocation, to attack, (as you do almost every body else) once and again; the first (a) time, upon an Argument for which you might better have fallen out

Letter I.

The Application to Mr. Le Clerc.

The occasion by way of Compassion and Amendment exemplified in his Treatment of several Modern.

And first of the Moderns. XXXVII. How Mr. Le Clerc has treated M. Abadie.

(1.) He finds fault with his Book of the Truth of the Christian Religion.

Entrer p. 273.

Letter I. with any other than with him; and the (a) second time, in order to contradict what he advanced in Answer to Spinoza's Objections against *Moses* the Writer of the *Pentateuch*; for both which you have paid sufficiently since. For in the (b) second Edition of his Book, he has answered you in such manner, and so home, that though he uses great Moderation, yet you cannot but evidently see the Inadvertency, the Insufficiency and the Temerity of all your Critical Learning; and besides, he has also plainly (c) proved (what we are chiefly to take Notice of) upon you, that you have ascribed things to him which he denies to be his, and that in your (d) Quotations of the Holy Scripture, you often times leave out such Parts and Passages as make most against you.

(a) Sent. Let. 6. p. 111. XXXVIII. But (2.) instead of being taught by such a Modest Correction to be more upon your Guard, you grow more enraged against the same Author; and therefore when afterwards to his first two Treatises he publicly added a third concerning the DIVINITY of JESUS CHRIST, you give an Epitome of that excellent Book in your *Bibliothèque* in such a manner, that 'tis truly amazing you never considered that your Readers would be very much put to it to determine, whether Falsehood or Malice had the Ascendant of you when you writ it? I shall not examine why you take all Opportunities to snarl at those Authors, who have most solidly refuted the Socinian Errors; nor why you attack them in those Parts of their Writings chiefly that relate to the Socinian Controversy; which surely is very imprudent in one that, though he has been always suspected, yet never would own himself a Socinian: Nor will I undertake to do Justice to that Book, of which we speak, against all your Falsifications. I shall only by the way take notice of such things as relate to my present Design, namely, to shew what little Credit ought to be given to your Accounts of Books and Authors, especially if they meddle with any of the Socinian Errors. Your Account of the Book in hand consists of four Parts; in the first you endeavour to stir up your Readers to Envy and Hatred against the Author, instead of giving him those praises and thanks which he justly deserves for having Refuted the Socinian Errors. In the Second you pretend that the Book treats of a Subject which it does not; in the third you propose and misrepresent the Opinion of the Orthodox about the

Reduced to
four Heads.

Letter I.

the Holy Trinity and the Eternal Godhead of the Son Incarnate, in a very absurd and ridiculous manner; and in the fourth, you mistake and misrepresent some parts of the Book itself. The first part, besides that it discovers the Malice of your Temper, than which scarce any thing else could make you to write such stuff, is so filthy, unreasonable and ridiculous, that though 'tis fit for nothing but to propagate some very pernicious Errors, (which you think the *Socinians* may be allowed to do) yet is it grounded only upon a vain and ridiculous Comparison, whereby you would have it that those who teach sound Doctrine, and those who broach false Notions should be compared to two contending Armies, who ought to be allowed equal Advantages of Ground, and to share alike in the Favour and Affection of the By-standers; otherwise you say 'tis below a generous Soldier to fight with another who has not the same Favour and Advantages allowed him: Whereas on the other side, it appears from the whole Tenor of the Scriptures, that those that teach and propagate Lies and Errors should not be compared to Soldiers, who have a right to Challenge our Favour; but rather to Seducers whom we must avoid and shut our Ears against, or to sowers of Tares, whom we are therefore carefully to watch, lest the Enemy come and Sow them while we are asleep. In the second Part, although the Author expressly (a) declares, *That he Designs to treat only of the Divinity of JESUS CHRIST, and not of his Incarnation, (or of the Union of the Divinity with the Humanity) nor of the Holy Trinity, because these things deserved to be treated of distinctly and apart*: Yet nevertheless you (b) bring him in by way of supposition, as presenting his Book to some certain Chinese Philosopher, and (c) explaining the state of the Question concerning the three Persons of the Deity, and the Hypostatical Union of the second Person with the Humanity of Jesus Christ: Where 'tis evident to a Demonstration, that the Books which you pretend to give an Account, (especially if they don't favour the *Socinian* Notions) you misrepresent and pervert the matter and subject of them at your own Pleasure; but without this, you had had no room, no opportunity to break your Jest upon the Sound and Orthodox Doctrines of the Catholick Church, before your Indian Philosopher. This the third Part of your Account contains, where you make an Indian Heathen (an excellent Judge of things

And answered
and refused.

(a) Pag. 4.

(b) Bib. p.
370.

(c) Bib. p.
371. p. 372.

Letter I.

things Spiritual, to be sure, which, as St. Paul says, are foolishness to the natural Man, not having the Spirit of God,) a judge of Orthodox Doctrines, which by way of Mockery, you draw up in the following Questions. 1. *Whether there be in God three Distinctions, of which we have no Idea; and between which there are certain Relations, of which likewise we have no Idea?* 2. *Whether the second of these unknown Distinctions was united to the Humanity of Christ in a manner likewise unknown?* Where 'tis evident that, besides your mistaking the Question, you propose the Divine Mysteries in a manner so favourable to the Socinians, and in such Ridiculous Terms, as can hardly fail of raising Laughter not only in Heathens and Prophane Men, but even almost in every body else. But had you stated the case fairly and according to the Author's mind, it should have been thus: "Whether those who believe that God is Omnipotent, incomprehensible and truth itself; that themselves are nothing but miserable Worms, and of such shallow and weak Capacities that they do not so much as comprehend the Nature of the least Hair of their own Heads; and who moreover acknowledge a certain Book, namely the Bible, to have come from God; whether such Persons, I say, when that Book witnesseth that God himself came among us, That it was he that spake to us, that instructed us, and that lived among us in a certain Body, and with a certain Soul, &c. ought not to believe all these things although they do not comprehend the manner how they should be; or reject them because they cannot? And again, as to the Holy Trinity (if this had been a proper place to say any thing of it) "Whether the same Persons, who agree in the incomprehensibility of God, the weakness of their own Capacity and the Divinity of the Scriptures, ought not, when the Scriptures mention a certain Sacred Triad in the Deity, to believe it although they do not understand it; or whether they should deny it, and do violence to the Scriptures, because they cannot? So that 'tis certain that even your Chinese Philosophers would give it against all those who should deny such things after they had agreed upon such common Principles, especially if those that deny them should acknowledge that they are not guided by the Spirit of God, and even boast that they don't want his Grace, Illumination and Internal Assistance,

Assistance, when yet the same Book, which they believe in, declares, That no Man can understand the things of God without the Spirit of God, and that to the natural Man, who has not that Spirit, they appear not only false, but even foolish and absurd: Which is the very Reason why those that deny the inward Grace of God, say they will not acknowledge those Mysteries; namely, because to them they appear absurd and incoherent. But enough of this. In the fourth part of your Account (not to mention other Things which are foreign to the matter in hand) where you more particularly set down the Contents of the Sections of the Book, you alledge, and, that it may not be lost, you repeat it three or four times, that in order to allow and acknowledge the Author's Arguments and Conclusions, it must be presupposed that his Interpretations of the Scriptures are true: Wherein you deal by him just as you did by me before, in alledging that I promised to give Demonstrations, provided the Readers would believe them, or receive them with Faith: Or as if one that had a Mind to cavil against a Mathematician upon the account of some Mathematical Demonstrations, should say, that it must indeed be acknowledged that they are true, provided it be presupposed that they are fairly and regularly deduced from sound Principles. But here indeed, nothing else is required or presupposed but that the Readers come with a sincere Mind and with a sound Judgment. For that a Demonstration is rightly deduced from received Principles, is not a thing that is supposed; but 'tis what is proved in the Demonstration: As in like manner in the Arguments of the incomparable Author, that the sense of the Scripture is such as he represents it, is not by him supposed, but proved: Which as to the substance of the Work, which I have perused, I can Witness to; and I doubt not but as many as shall Read the same in sincerity and uprightness of Heart, will also be of the same Opinion with me.

XXXIX. (3.) In a Book, entituled, *Entretiens sur diverses matieres de Theologie*, (tho' the first part of it was not written, yet * it was published and approved by you as agreeable to your Principles,) † Vossius is often cited as one who with you and the Socinians rejects the proofs that are commonly alledged in favour of Original Sin; or at least as one that seems to favour the Objections that are raised against that Doctrine: Yea,

Letter I.

XXXIX. (3.) Vossius Misrepresented in a Book * published by Mr. Le Clerc, † Entrer. p. 181.

you

Letter I. you have there || published the following Objection, which you say, *He mentions but does not Answer. Adam could not transmit his Sin to his Posterity, but either as a Moral, or as a Physical and efficient Cause: For between them there is no Medium.* But neither of these ways could he do it, &c. And then afterwards you endeavour to excuse him † for betraying his Cause, in producing and not answering this Objection. Who would not now believe you, when you cite the very places of a Book, where such Things may be found? For my part, I believed it was so at first; and indeed it did not a little contribute to lessen my esteem for *Vossius*, and of that excellent Book of his, before I read it; yea I was, upon your Testimony, somewhat scared, from looking into his Book, as not deserving to be read. But happening one time by chance to light on the Book, and to dip in it here and there, this Place came into my Mind which I turned to, and behold to my great Admiration I found that *Vossius* was most unworthily traduced by you. For in the Place which you quote he is so far from betraying his Cause, by answering nothing, That on the contrary he confirms it very solidly. Moreover, in the same Place he answers that Objection two ways, and that in these express Words: * *Adam is the occasion of it, (The Transmission of Sin to his Posterity) as a moral Cause: In as much as by a moral and voluntary Act he merited and brought upon himself and all his Posterity the Privation of Original Righteousness. But tho' ADAM be not directly the Physical, but only the moral Cause of Original Sin; yet indirectly he may also be called the Physical Cause thereof, as he is the real Cause of that Cause which occasions the Privation of Righteousness.* See here, how expressly he declares the contrary of what you attributed to him two several ways! Yea, even in the Preface of the same Work, he very remarkably inculcates the same Thing: *I have shewn, says he, that Vincentius Lirinensis was in the Right, when he writ, that none before Cælestius, that monstrous Disciple of Pelagius, ever denied that all Mankind was involv'd in the guilt of Adam's Transgression.* But this Place of *Vossius* may be more commodiously refer'd to the next Observation.

But at last vindicated from his own Writings.

* Voss. Hist. Pelag. lib. 2. p. 3. Thes. 1. p. 221. Edit. II.

XL. (4.) Mr. Le Clerc asserts that the Ancient Fathers were Ignorant of the Doctrine of Original Sin.

XL. (4.) In the same Book, and in many Places of your other Writings, you frequently affirm that the Primitive Church, and all the most Ancient of the Fathers were Ignorant of the Doctrine of Original Sin.

there

thers knew nothing of this Doctrine of Original Sin; and as you are unjust to them, in denying that they knew any thing of it, so are you likewise to St. *Augustin*, in * ascribing it so particularly to him, as if he had been the first that broach'd it. If any one doubt of this let him read *Vossius's History of Pelagianism*, which you sometimes quote; where he will † find Twenty Three Pages, fill'd with the Testimonies of others, all before St. *Augustin*, for Confirmation of this Doctrine: All which the Learned Author produces upon occasion and in proof of this Theses. St. *Augustin* proves this Doctrine out of the Writings of the first Fathers; whose Testimonies are so clear and evident (as are likewise many others which he has not mentioned) that 'tis really amazing that there should have been any Old, or any that now a-days should look upon this Doctrine as St. *Augustin's* Invention, and even endeavour to make others believe so too. And then after bringing in St. *Augustin*, answering this reproach of the Pelagian, that he was the first that had invented and maintained Original Sin, in these Words; 'Tis not I that have invented Original Sin, which the Catholick Faith believed from the beginning; But 'tis you without doubt, who deny it, that is to be accounted a new Heretick; *Vossius* goes on, and in Testimony thereof, he quotes of the Greek Fathers, *Ignatius of Antioch*, *Justin Martyr*, *Tatian*, *Irenaeus*, *Origen*, *Methodius*, the two *Macarius's*, *Athanasius*, *Cyril*, *Basil*, *Gregory Nazienzen*, *Isychius*, *Chrysostom*, and of St. *Augustin's* Contemporaries, and those that came after him, some others; and of the *Latins*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Anobius*, *Reticius*, *Olympius*, *Hilarius*, *Ambrose*, *Optatus Millevitanus*, *Prudentius*, *Hilarius Diaconus*, *Hierom*; and then concludes all with this remarkable Question of *Vincentius Lyrinensis*; Who ever before the Profane *Pelagius* presumed to ascribe such Power to free Will, as to think that the Grace of God was not continually necessary to assist the same in every Good Work? Who before *Caelestius* his monstrous Disciple ever denied that all Mankind were involved in the guilt of Adam's Transgression? And yet tho' you see and read these Things, you still go on and endeavour to persuade the World; || That nothing is more remote from the Faith of the Church before St. *Augustin*, than to believe, as he did, that we are all in general and equally Corrupted through Adam's Sin; and that he was the first that brought that Doctrine into the Church out of the School of the *Manichees*!

Letter I.

* Entret. p.

115, 116, 124,

125, 127, &c.

Item Liberij.

de S. Am. Ep.

vi. p. 164.

† Lib. ii. part

1. Thes. 6. p.

158, &c.

And that St.

Austin was

the first Au-

thor of it.

Both which Ca-

lumnies are re-

futed by Vos-

sius.

Entret. p.

115, 116.

XLI. (5.) *Mr. Le Clerc* also affirms that the Primitive Church was wholly ignorant of the Doctrine of inward and operating Grace; and that St. *Augustin* was the first Author thereof. The contrary proved by *Vossius*.
 XLI. (5.) In like manner you * affirm that the Primitive Church knew nothing of the necessity of an inward and operating Grace; and that St. *Augustin*, call the Divine Grace, by way of derision, St. *Augustin's* Grace. But how falsely you have accused both the Church and St. *Augustin* in this matter also, is evident from the many irrefragable and express Testimonies both of several Greek and Latin Fathers, quoted at large by *Vossius* in his || Book before-mention'd. and that St.

Augustin was the first Author thereof. The contrary proved by *Vossius*.
 * Entret. p. 345, 346, 358, 365. † Ibid. p. 325. || Hist. Pelag. Lib. iii. Part 1 and 2. chiefly from p. 278 to 304.

XLII. A more particular vindication of St. *Augustin*.
 XLII. I believe it would be unnecessary to produce any more Instances to shew what little Credit is to be given to you when you give an account of the Sense and Writings of any Author that treats of a Subject which you don't like: These, I think, are sufficient, and more might possibly tire the Reader, or be looked upon as Superfluous, and of no use. Permit me however, I pray, to shew in the last Place, in how dishonest and in my Opinion, inhuman a Manner you treat the Great St. *Augustin*, against whom you are more bitter in your invectives than against any other; calling him every where throughout your Writings, a Converted Manichean, one that was but ill Cured of Manicheism, a wretched Interpreter of the Scriptures, one that blabs out any Thing that comes into his Mouth, a perpetual Dreamer; with such like opprobrious Epithets, even to that degree of Insolence, that you go on and * quote an Italian Lampoon made upon him; permit me, I say, to add a few Words in vindication of this Holy and Venerable Prelate of the Church; who, because he Taught, and Writ, and Strenuously asserted that Doctrine, which utterly subverts and destroys all Socinianism and Pelagianism; all Self-Love and Pride of Heart; is therefore fallen so deeply under your displeasure.

* Entret. p. 369.

XLIII. Mr. *Le Clerc* differs from St. *Augustin*.
 XLIII. There are Three Things especially in St. *Augustin*, which you dislike: 1. The Doctrine of Original Sin: 2. The Doctrine of the Necessity of Divine Grace working inwardly to Salvation: 3. The Doctrine First, about Original Sin. Secondly, about Inward Grace. And, Thirdly, about Predestination.

about

Letter I.

about the Particularity of that Grace given to some, and denied to others; and of the irresistibility thereof; that is, of Absolute and Particular Predestination; all which 'tis needless to explain more particularly in this Place. Now, that the First and Second of these cannot but be very odious and disagreeable to *Pelagianism*, and Self-Love, is so evident that it wants no proof; but as many as from a due regard to those Commands, which *Christ* principally enjoins in the Gospel, thought it their Duty to hate and deny themselves, have not only always agreed in the Truth of them, but even received and looked upon them as the surest Foundations of their Faith and Hope. For, who would put his trust in God, if he did not first mistrust himself? And who can mistrust himself, unless he really see and acknowledge his own Weakness and Corruption? Finally, who can ever faithfully resign and yield up himself and all the Faculties of his Soul, the Desire, the Understanding, the Will, &c. into the Hands of God, unless he look upon him as the only Guide and true Physician of Souls, and as the internal and efficient Cause of his Salvation? As to the Third, that God bestows his Grace upon some only, and that in an irresistible Manner, 'tis what some of the otherwise Orthodox Fathers took up with, because that, not having a true Idea of Liberty, they were afraid least, if they should grant that it was in the Power of Man to obtain or accept of Grace or not, to be Saved or not, it should follow that Man is the Cause of his own Salvation; or that he could obtain Grace at his own Pleasure: And therefore in order to discountenance such Erroneous Tenents, as being contrary to the first and second Truths, and favouring Pride and Self-Love, they chose rather to Teach, that the Grace by which we are Saved depends upon God in such a Manner, that seeing it so happens that all are not Saved by it, that therefore God neither did nor would give it to all Men; but only to some, who should be irresistibly Saved thereby. And this indeed, they defended out of a Good Principle, namely, the Love of God (as aiming thereby to promote his Glory only) and the Hatred of our own Pride and Self-Love (that no Man might have whereof to Boast.) But the rest of the Orthodox did not come into this Opinion: But either passing by the Difficulties which perplexed others, or it may be, thinking that they might easily be accounted for, and besides being of Opinion that

St. Austin
vindicated as
to the First and
Second Points.

And also in
what relates to
the Third.

Predestination
was at first
maintained
from a good
Principle.

But the con-
trary Opinion
obtained with
most of the Or-
thodox Chri-
stians.

the

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Both before
and since St.
Austin's time.
* Hist. Pelag.
Lib. vii.
Part 1. and 2.
XLIV. The
Socinian and
Pelagian No-
tions about
the Universa-
lity of Grace,
though they
seem to agree
in some things,
yet are they
wholly diffe-
rent from the
true Doctrine
taught by the
Catholick
Church.

the Love of God might be better promoted, and that it would be a greater motive for Men to use their endeavours to obtain the same, if it was Taught that the Grace of God is indeed offer'd to all Men, but that every one is at Liberty to accept of it or not; the rest of the Orthodox, I say, for these Reasons embraced this Opinion, which not only prevailed in St. *Augustin's* Time, and after him, but flourished long before his Days, and was almost universally received, as may be seen from the Testimonies of the Fathers quoted by * *Vossius*, and as yet appears, even at this Day in the greatest part of the *Roman Church*.

XLIV. But those that plead the Cause of Pride and Self Love, have not only disputed and denied the first and second of the above-mention'd Truths, which St. *Augustin* held in common with all the rest of the Primitive Church; but as to the third, they would fain have it thought that tho' they differ from St. *Augustin*, yet that they agree therein with the other Orthodox Fathers: Which is only a crafty and false Insinuation. For what have they to do with the Particularity or Universality, the Resistibility or Irresistibility of the Internal Grace of God, whereby we are inwardly healed, quickned, guided and saved; when they substitute and mean nothing but a pretended superficial Grace (whether Resistible or Irresistible, let them see) laid, like so much Varnish, over Proud and Corrupted Hearts? Therefore they neither maintain the Doctrine of Universal Grace in an Orthodox Sense, nor upon Orthodox Principles. For, it is neither out of a Principle of true Humility, nor from a Desire of promoting God's Glory alone, that they maintain and teach, that the saving Grace of God is inwardly offer'd to all Men, so that they may, if they please, not make and produce, but by their own free Consent admit and suffer it to act, to illuminate, to heal, and finally to perfect them: But 'tis only out of a Principle of Pride, which is not willing to be Rejected, but Loved; and from Self-love, which is not willing to be Damned, but Saved; I say, 'tis from such Principles only that they teach that God Loves all Men, and that he will save them by such External Means as they in the midst of all their Pride and Self-Love, without hating and denying themselves, without acknowledging their own inward Misery and Corruption, and without the inward help of God, can very well perform; so that they flatter themselves with the

the belief that Pride and Self-Love are very consistent with Salvation.

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XLV. But now who does not see that this Pelagian Notion of the Universality of Divine Grace is much worse than that of St. *Augustin*, of Predestination and particular Grace: This Opinion may very well consist with the Foundations of Faith and Hope; and a Good Man may think so, as I have shewn more at large * elsewhere: But that shakes and destroys them; and if it was true, that God could save the Proud, and those that are given up to the Love of themselves, it would make him a-favourer of and accomplice with (saving the Blasphemy of the Expression!) Devils, which is worse than *Manicheism*, which you and the Modern Pelagians charge upon St. *Augustin*. For the *Manichæans*, altho' they held two opposite Principles of Good and Evil, yet they never thought that they could be reconciled one to the other; whereas according to this Pelagian Hypothesis, they may be reconciled and united together.

XLV. The Pelagian Notion worse than Predestination. * *Div. Oecon. Vol. v. ch. 7. No. 15, 16. and Vol. vi.*

XLVI. But because St. *Augustin*, who agreed intirely with the Catholick Church in Fundamentals about Original Corruption and inward Grace, did differ from the same in the third and less material point: And because the Pelagians on the other side, who deny the first two Fundamental Articles, agree with the former and with the greatest part of the Church about the Universality of Grace, and the Liberty of Man's Will, and that too but in name and appearance only, and not in reality, there being under the ambiguity of the Word, a wide difference between them as to the matter: Hence it comes that the Pelagians, under that nominal and fallacious appearance only, do most deceitfully join themselves with those first Catholicks, as if they entirely agreed together upon the matter; and then afterwards opposing themselves to St. *Augustin* in every thing, they presume to bring in the Primitive Church (to which they first most deceitfully and indistinctly joined themselves by an Equivocation) as agreeing with them in their Notions against him: So that because he taught and maintained the true Doctrine which utterly subverts and destroys all Pelagian Pride and Self-Love, they rail and exclaim against him, and by that means in and through his sides, who agreed in other Things with the Church, they take the greater Liberty to display their Spite and Malice against all true Primitive Christianity. And

XLVI. The Reason why the Pelagians pretend that their Opinion about the Universality of Grace is the same with that of the Generality of Christians.

And why they are so inveterate against St. *Austin*.

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unless, besides the universal and native aversion of Corrupt Nature to the Truth, as above-mentioned, you also acknowledge these more special Reasons for your Inveterate Hatred of *St. Augustin*, 'tis to be wished that God would open your Heart, and make you truly sensible thereof; for in your Books, especially those against * *Father Simon*, all that I have alleged is very evident to be seen; which shews that what you have said does not flow from the Love of the Truth, but from the Indefatigable Malignity of Hatred and other Evil Affections.

* Sentimens

Epist. 16. p.

357, &c. De-

fens. des Sent.

Epist. 14. p.

367.

XLVII. A

Character of

St. Austin and

his Writings.

In what man-
ner Mr. Le
Clerc treats
both.

XLVII. For had you examined the Writing of this Holy Father in the Spirit of Love and Charity, the many resplendent Vertues which adorned his Pious Soul, and which even his Enemies have never Questioned, especially those which are all in all, the Love of God and his Neighbour accompanied with a most profound Humility, had afforded you a larger Field for Praise and Commendation, than one or two involuntary and unknown Mistakes, can be supposed to do for your Censure and Reproach: for so far was he from excusing or defending any Errors, that he was often wont to lament and be sorry for them if he knew them, and to confess them with that Sincerity of Heart, and in such a manner both before God and Man, that as many as heard and knew him could not but see, that in his most Devout and Humble Soul there was no Guile. But you on the contrary, not in the least regarding these and such like Things, nor any of the many salutary Truths which this Holy Doctor Taught and Inculcated for promoting the Love of God and other Christian Vertues; I say instead of taking notice of these and the like, you rather act the part of the Spider, who from the sweetest Flowers sucks the worst of Poison. You invent and insist upon some common Topicks, to bring the Piety of the Ancients into suspicion, as if they had written one way and lived another; but they are such as by no means agree with *St. Augustin*, whose Life, as to the Good and Evil thereof, has been canvassed and published both by his Friends and Enemies, and even by himself, who was the greatest Enemy to himself: Then, whenever you think you have discovered a Fault in him, you are so far from treating him with that Moderation, which you allow to *Grotius* and *Hammond*, &c. on the like occasions, that, as if indeed you was not conscious to your self of any Infirmities, you do not in any of your

Letter I.

your Corrections so much as observe the Moderation of the Hypocrite in the Gospel, who civilly admonished his Brother of the Mote in his Eye; when there was a Beam in his own: But as if you had forgot the Commandment, which enjoins us to Honour our Parents, i. e. our Elders also, and the Grey Hairs, and those who in the Church of God presided over the rest for their Instruction in *Christ*, and are now at rest with God; or as if you had a mind to equal or outdo the Wickedness of *Ham*, who exposed his Father's Nakedness, and for which he and his Posterity were justly accursed, you not only expose the Nakedness (if any there be) of the Holy Father's to the Derision of the whole World; but you often make and invent what truly is not so, and challenge every one to come and see it; and then after all, when one does come there appears nothing that wants to be hid (if it could be done) but rather the contrary.

XLVIII. For Example, There is none that Reads what you have charged upon St. *Augustin* in your Book mentioned in the Margin (a) (from Page 366 to 371) who will not think that St. *Augustin* was of that Cruel and Inhuman Temper, that he believed and Taught, that it is lawful for the Orthodox to compel Hereticks and those that are led away into any Error, to believe a thing against the Light of their Conscience witnessing to the Opinions which they embrace; and that even by Force, nay, that they may be punished with Death, even while they are believed to be in a state of Damnation, that as it would seem, they may please themselves in the horrible Thoughts of having hurried a Soul away into Perdition. Unless your Readers form such an Idea of St. *Augustin* from your Context, * which is very long and artfully contrived, I will willingly submit my self to what Censure any of them shall think I deserve. You say your self in express Words, that it follows from his Doctrine, That he that is most powerful has a right to Persecute Others, and that as every one is persuaded of the Truth of his own OPINIONS, and believes that others are in an Error; so is he in proportion bound in Conscience to persecute them. You also † say his Doctrine is Abominable. And again, in the same Place, which is also repeated in your || *Bibliothèque*, you say, || that the most subtle of all the Fathers, did very gravely publish the most Inhuman Doctrine that ever was heard of among Men; and you ascribe such Things to him (towards the end of your Epistle) that you seem

XLVIII. St. *Austin* represented as one of a Cruel, Sanguinary and Persecuting Temper. (a) Defense des Sentimens des Theol. de Holl.

* Pag. 369, 370.

† Pag. 367.

|| Bibli. Tom. iii. p. 122.

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XLIX. St.
Austin vindicated from
those Aspersions.

* See more relating to this, in Mr. Claude Part iii. chap. iv. of his *De la Reform. The Case of the Donatists stated.*

to be in a manner Angry with your self, because you have not treated him with less respect than you have done. So far therefore does your Malice against him go, that 'tis not your Fault, if the whole World does not hate and abhor St. *Augustin*, as one of a Cruel, Sanguinary, Malicious and Diabolical Temper.

XLIX. But that these neither were the Sentiments, nor that any thing like them is contained in, or fairly deduceable from the Writings of this Holy Father; but that they are mere Invectives, Calumnies and Impostures cast upon him, will evidently appear to any one, that upon reading those scraps which you have pick'd out of a Letter of his to *Vincentius*, shall observe upon reading the whole Letter, and some other Things relating to the same Subject, that you have wrested every Thing he said on certain particular subjects or occasions, to other subjects and matters wholly different from them, which (according to your usual way) you substitute in the room of those of which St. *Augustin* treated. For in his dispute with the *Donatists*, he does not treat of matters of * Faith nor of the Articles which every one ought to believe in order to Salvation, nor consequently that any one should by any means, much less upon Pain of Death, be compelled to believe them.

But the Question there is about yielding an External Obedience to superiours in matters of Discipline, and about preserving the publick Peace, with regard to Matters of Fact and Things Personal, decided and enjoind by lawful Judges (such as the *Donatists* themselves had desired) yea, and by the Supreme Power it self. Now that the higher Powers could compel such as shewed themselves refractory to Obedience, and that upon pain of Suffering Capital Punishments if they continued Obstinate and Committed all sorts of Outrages and Cruelties, in defence of their Rebellion, no Body, unless he be too Indulgent, or even a professed Patron of Wickedness, will presume to deny. And this was the Case of the *Donatists*, of whom St. *Augustin* speaks. They were not a Sect that disputed about matters of Faith, or that differed in such Points from the Catholicks; but it was a Party or Multitude that Wickedly Rebelled against their Governors, to whom they refused to be subject as to Externals. After that a Bishop had been duely Elected and Placed over them, they refused to obey him as their Superior in Matters of External Discipline; they reject him; they

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they Seditiously set up another; and then demand Judges to whose Decision they may submit themselves; they refuse to submit to their Determination; they a second and third time demand others, and as often reject their Decisions: They appeal to *Cæsar*; and though his Sentence related only to the publick Peace and External Obedience, and did not in the least enjoin them to change any Article of their Faith, yet they refuse to submit to his Authority too: Then seeing that all their ways of acting were condemned by all the Churches, they declare themselves open Enemies to all Societies, and to their Disobedience they afterwards add Tumults, Seditions, Persecutions; they are guilty of all sorts of Outrages; they even kill and murder their Bishops and Presbyters; they burn and lay waste all before them, they commit many other Cruelties and Barbarities; and if any of them repented or shewed an Inclination to return to their Obedience, why then both they and their Houses were destroyed and razed to the ground by their Companions; and so far were they from shewing any Inclination to return to Peace and Obedience, that they rather went on in their wicked Courses, and did what in them lay both to disturb themselves and the whole Church by their Ravages and Persecutions. At last the Catholick Bishops deliberate among themselves, whether or no they might call in the secular Power to their Assistance, in order to quell such Monsters, and reduce them to Order? St. *Augustin*, according to the wonted meekness of his Temper, thought that the Ecclesiastical Order ought not to have recourse to any other means against them, but Admonition and Patience: The other Bishops thought that the Laws and Authority of Christian Emperors might be called in to their Assistance: And this was done. The Imperial Laws therefore interpose, and are made use of in order to put a stop to this unnatural Rebellion and Disobedience, not such as touched the Life of the Offender; but only such as regarded the Estates, and sometimes extended to the banishment of some Persons; not such as compelled any one to change his Faith; but only commanded him to give over his Rebellion, and to return to Peace and Concord with those of the same Faith with himself. These Laws for the most part produce the desired Effect: St. *Augustin* from the Event approves of the thing, and changes his former Opinion, which was, that those Refractory

Vid. Epist. Aug. ad Bonifacium (quæ est 50 in Ed. Altorf. 1668.) ubi tota Historia diducte Narratur.

Letter I.

St. Austin
vindicated
with relation
to the Dona-
tists.

(a) See Eras-
mus's Cha-
racter of St.
Austin, pre-
fix'd to his
Epistles.

(b) Epist.
127. Edit.
Altorf.

Persons ought only to be admonished by their Pastors, but not forced by calling in the Civil Powers to their Assistance, to return to Order and Obedience. Now where is the Crime of all this in St. *Augustin*? What Affinity or Relation is there between this and that monstrous Doctrine which you ascribe to him, unless it be some Words, as when he calls those Refractory and Schismatical Persons, *Hereticks*, according to the Sense of the word in his days; or as when he calls Obedience and Justice, *Truth* or possibly *Faith*; whence matters of Faith and matters of Discipline may possibly by unwary Persons be confounded one with the other, when yet the Subjects and the Causes, and also the effects are wholly different? And indeed among all the Fathers you could not have pitched upon one, who less deserves your Accusation of Inhumanity and Cruelty, as to his Sentiments and Doctrines: On the contrary, the meekness of the Spirit of Christ joined with a most admirable Humility of Heart, were so peculiar to him, and they appear so evidently throughout all his Writings, that it must be allowed that in those respects he excells all the rest. (a) Yea, so averse was this Holy Man from inflicting Punishments, or spilling Blood, that though the Donatists had for Murders committed rendered themselves obnoxious to such Punishments, yet he powerfully interceded for them; so far was he from rejoicing in their Death or Damnation, as you very uncharitably and unjustly suspect. Thus in his Letter about that Affair to Donatus the Proconsul of *Africa*, he has these Words: (b) *We are very much afraid ——— least you should think the means of restraining and suppressing the Evil (which the Donatists had brought upon the Church) should be proportioned to the Atrociousness of the Crimes, rather than tempered with Christian Lenity; which we beseech you in the Name of JESUS CHRIST, that you would not do. For we neither seek revenge of our Enemies in this World, nor ought any thing that we suffer to make us forget what he commanded, for whose Truth and Name we suffer, namely to love our Enemies and pray for them. Wherefore to the end they may escape Eternal Punishments, we wish that the Authority of the Laws and the rigour of their Judges may be made use of as means to correct, but not to kill them: We would neither have a due Discipline neglected, nor the Punishments which they deserve, rigorously inflicted. Give therefore such a check to their Offences, that it may repent them that they have offended. We pray you*

you therefore that when you bear the Churches Cause, though you should find that she is most wickedly abused and ill treated, yet that you would forget that you have the Power of Death, and that you would not forget our Petition. Let it not seem a mean or contemptible thing, my honourably beloved Son, that we pray you not to kill those whom we Pray to God that he would correct; besides that we are also bound never to depart from that rule to overcome evil with good; and let your Prudence consider this also, that none but Ecclesiastical Persons have power to bring Ecclesiastical Affairs before you. Therefore if you think that Men ought for such Offences to be put to Death, you will deter us from being any wise instrumental in bringing such matters before you hereafter; and when once they find this, they will set themselves against us with more fury than ever, and we shall be reduced to the necessity, rather to choose to suffer them to kill us, than to bring them before your Tribunals to be put to Death. Disdain not, I beseech you, to accept of this my Admonition, Petition and Prayer. To this add that place to Marcellinus the Tribune (which (a) Grotius himself commends) about the same People: (b) I am under great concern lest perchance your Excellency should think that they ought to be punished according to the utmost severity of the Laws, so that what things they have done to others, such they should suffer themselves, and this I do by these Letters most earnestly beseech, and conjure you upon your Faith, which you have in Christ, through the Mercy and compassion of the Lord Christ himself, that you neither do, nor by any means suffer this to be done, &c. The whole Letter, which from the beginning to the End, is nothing but a most Pathetic and Ardent Intercession for them, deserves to be read; as also that to Apringius the Judge, which ends in these Words, Contend therefore in Goodness with many. They in a most inhuman manner tore away the Members from the living Body (the Donatists most barbarously pulled out the Eyes of some Catholicks) but do you practice a work of Mercy, so that those Members which were then employed in such wicked Deeds, may be made serviceable to some good and profitable Work. They did not spare the Servants of God, who forewarned them of their Correction; do you spare those that are taken; spare those that are brought before you; spare those that are Convicted. They with the Sword of wickedness shed Christian Blood; do you keep back even the Sword of Justice from their Blood, for Christ's sake. They having killed a Minister of the Church, did

(a) De Jure
Belli, Lib.
ii. ch. 20.
§. 36.
(b) Epist. 159.

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by violent means shorten the Thread of Life; but do you enlarge the time of Repentance to the Churches Enemies. Such a Judge in Ecclesiastical matters you must shew your self upon our Petition, Admonition and Intercession. Many other instances might be produced to the same purpose, if these were not sufficient to vindicate the meek Temper and glorious Character of this Holy Man from the imputation of Cruelty, which you invidiously charge upon him. To this Calumny indeed (a) *Erasmus* (who was never yet suspected of Cruelty) would be more obnoxious, who thought that the Laws made against the *Donatists* were more gentle than they should have been; and (b) *Wierus*, who was of so merciful a Disposition that he thought that some Clemency was even due to Witches, was of the same Opinion. But say you, *St. Augustine* praised the Capital Laws against the Pagan Sacrifices. Here again, you state the matter wrong. Did *St. Augustine* praise any Laws commanding that the Pagans should be put to Death for their Opinions, even those relating to their Sacrifices, unless they would change their Minds, and Embrace and believe other things against the Light of their Conscience? By no means; but he says that every Body commended those Laws, which under pain of capital Punishments, prohibited the EXTERNAL Performance of the Pagan Sacrifices, because that in such External Actions there were many things practised contrary to the Laws and Dictates of Nature, against Good Manners, and destructive of Civil Society; so that it was altogether unaccountable how, unless *Satan* had first blinded Mens Eyes, such Things ever came to be suffered. In their Sacrifices and Attonements to their Gods, they practised and praised all manner of Filthiness, and all sorts of Vices in direct opposition to all Good Manners; they used filthy and abominable Ceremonies, they offered human Blood, and even practised Sorcery and Witchcraft; Now when such things ought even to have been prohibited by the Heathens themselves, under capital Penalties, why might not a Christian Power, when it came to hold the Reins, and after the Light of the Truth had more clearly discovered the Iniquity of such Things, prohibit those EXTERNAL ACTIONS, which corrupted Mens Manners, in order to deter them from such abominable Practices? For 'tis certain that the said Laws were not Promulgated with an Intention to be put in execution, but only to terrify (as is usual) and reclaim Men from evil; whatever

(a) *Erasmus* in Apol. ad Alphonf. Manric. Archiepiscop. Sevil. in Tom. IX. operum. (b) *Wierus* de Prestig. Dem. Lib. 6. chap. 18. *St. Austin* vindicated with Regard to the Capital Laws against Pagan Sacrifices.

whatever you suggest out of your own head to the contrary; neither were they approved of by St. Augustine and his Contemporaries, but only in that Sense, as is evident from the Quotations just now mentioned. But if you are displeased at this, it's no Wonder; for the Holy Scriptures cannot please you, when they declare any thing that contradicts your Judgment; you then attribute to corrupt Affections the Maxims of those, who were divinely inspired, as among many others, that Place in the 137. Psalm, v. 9. where 'tis much to be wondered, that after you had found fault with that and some other Places of Scripture, you did not inveigh more bitterly against the Psalmist than against St. Augustine.

L. After that you have in good earnest attempted in one Place to paint St. Augustine as hateful and odious, you elsewhere endeavour to render him ridiculous by such Arts and Contrivances of your own as are directly contrary to Truth and Charity; viz. 1. By imputing many false and absurd Things to him, as I have already proved by several Instances. 2. By your perpetual Jest and Witticisms, of which presently. 3. By Disputing about Trifles of little or no Moment, and wholly passing by the Principal and most material Points. 4. By taxing his Writings and Opinions, and indeed the whole System of the Christian Religion as he proposes it, as favouring of Platonism, and sometimes (a) you call him a Myfick, or one that continually wanders in the Clouds, and then he is an Allegorist, whose Allegories, because the Love of Spiritual things does not affect any but pure and well disposed Minds, you say are cold and barren. Then you wonder that the Pelagians your Predecessors did not by these your Arts expose him, and make him appear ridiculous; but say you, (b) they were not great Criticks: you then, who are a great Critick, shall do it for them; for that Mimical Art is the greatest Talent which you generally employ, and wherewith you have hitherto endeavoured to make all others appear ridiculous to the World.

LI. And indeed by such Methods you may easily gain your point upon St. Augustine, if you constantly pass by the main Scope and Substance of his Writings, namely the Honour of Christ, solid Piety, the right fear of the Lord, continual Penitence, the most pure Love of God, a most ardent Charity to all Mankind, a profound Humility of Soul, true Sanctity, and all other

Letter I.

L. What Methods Mr. Le Clerc takes to make St. Augustine appear ridiculous.

(a) Sentim. Supra. p. 357.

(b) Ibid. p. 359.

LI. The Injustice of which proceeding is illustrated.

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Letter II.

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(a) Sentim. Supra. p. 357.

(b) Ibid. p. 359.

LI. The Injustice of which proceeding is illustrated.

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(a) Sentim.

P. 44.

other Divine and Christian Vertues ; and then catch at some smaller matters here and there, concerning which, he himself, by your own (a) confession, acknowledges, *That without any prejudice to our Faith as Christians, we may either be ignorant of the Truth, and suspend our Judgment ; or through human weakness and frailty be mistaken in our conjectures about them ;* which is far from that Arrogance, wherewith you very unjustly say, he insists upon such Things as Oracles. Nevertheless, because of these smaller Mistakes, from which however he endeavours to excite Piety and Reverence towards God and Man, and to draw all Men to God their chief end, and because they are not exactly agreeable to the Rules and Niceties of your vain and superficial Criticism, therefore you expose him to the Contempt and Ridicule of those, whom he endeavours to stir up to Divine Vertue, and to seek after God : In like manner, and with much the same pious Intention, as if in a numerous Family, to whom the Father had left a Book containing Orders and Instructions to reverence and obey him, and to live together in Brotherly Love and Concord, one of superiour Parts and Experience should expound the said Book to his Brethren in such a Sense and manner as might induce them to Love and Honour the Father, and make them easy and unanimous among themselves : This management of yours, I say, is as if upon such an occasion, some one of the Children more froward than the rest, despising the sincere and laudable Intention of his Brother, and mistaking the main scope and substance of his Discourse, should laugh at him and all the rest, and endeavour to ridicule whatever the other had said, because he had said some things of lesser moment, which could not bear a strict Critical Examination ; and should therefore, though such harmless mistakes did nothing but contribute to bend and dispose them to Love and observe their Father's Will, traduce him as a wicked and perverse Interpreter of the Will and Intention of their common Father : This is exactly your Case with regard to St. *Augustin*. This, surely, is a mighty Evil, to use all Innocent means, though possibly not so exact as Critics might wish, to promote Vertue and Honesty among Mankind ! who would not be ashamed to give such a mean and malicious Reason for Caviling ? allow there may be some things in the matter of his Discourse, not Circumstantially exact, or not agreeing together

together in every Tittle, what of all that? The sincerity of a Man's Heart, the sanctity of his Design, and the good Intention of his Will knows how to turn every thing that he says to a good use, and to make it subservient to the love of God and the good of his Neighbour: And I could shew that some of the most Holy Persons, even the inspired Writers, yea and even God himself, have admitted of such Improperities, and made use of them to reduce Men to Holy Order. Did any one of a Critical Disposition propose to raise his Fame by gathering together a great many vain trifling Observations (such as are most of thole in your *Bibliothèque*) wherewith to gratify the itching Curiosity of his Readers, and should he at the same time be found to have committed many Blunders and Mistakes (as you too have often done) or should he with any such design publish whole Books upon such idle Subjects, under the Name of *Observations* or *Sacred Questions*; then possibly in such a case, especially considering the folly of seeking Glory in such a way, another might find matter enough for Ridicule.

LII. But 'tis evident beyond Dispute that St. *Augustin's* Design is not from little Questions to catch at the Praises of Men, which from a Principle of true Humility he utterly despised; nor to Excite or Tickle the vain curiosity of his Hearers or Readers with Critical Accuracies; but that his whole aim and design was, by taking hold of every occasion to excite in Mens Minds holy Motions, to produce and cultivate the Glory, Worship and Love of God alone, and to humble and deny themselves before him. So that consequently in his Writings and in his Discourses to the People, 'tis plain that his Design was not to explain the Scriptures after a Critical or Grammatical way; nor yet simply after an External and Historical manner, in order to make them good Criticks or Historians; but rather in that way, which is the great Principle, the scope and the subject matter of the Scriptures, *The Love of God and our Neighbour*, which is able both to make and to preserve true Christians. This is the Method which this Holy Man took; he was possess'd of the Principle, the scope, the Matter; he was singularly endued with the Spirit of the Scriptures; that is, he had obtained the Spirit of Prayer, Divine Love, Mortification, Charity, Humility, which are the Keys and Dispositions to which

Letter I.

LII. How St. *Austin* Interpreted the Scriptures.

Letter I.

His Interpretations generally agree with the sense and scope of the Scripture, Which none of Mr. Le Clerc's do.

(a) Oecon.
Vol. iii. ch.

14.
LIII. *It does not become the Moderns to reflect upon and ridicule the Ancient Fathers of the Church.*

our Heavenly Father has faithfully promised that he will open the salutary Sense and hidden Meanings of the Scriptures. And yet for all this you are neither afraid nor ashamed to traduce this great and good Man as ridiculous and silly; as one of the worst Interpreters of the Scripture, *and as one that was not provided with any proper means for Interpreting it*; all which you say is evident from every part of his Writings. But for all your assurance, I affirm, and I'll venture what you please upon it, that though possibly some of his Interpretations may not be so accurate in every point, as to the Literal, Superficial and Critical part, yet that there is not one of a thousand of them but what agrees with, and contains the sense and scope of the Holy Scriptures, as above-mentioned; and that of your own Expositions there is not so much as one perfectly agreeable to the Mind of God and to the salutary Sense of the Scriptures; but that on the other side, they (although you may have said some things, which may agree with the External, Literal and Accidental Sense of the Scriptures) either conceal or enervate, or destroy and contradict the Mind and Intention of God. And he that will but a little consider what I have written about the subject matter of Interpretation and Criticism in my Books of *Erudition*, and also in the (a) *Oeconomy*, will see that I have very good Reason for what I say.

LIII. And if the Sincere and Judicious Part of Mankind would but consider and observe the Rules that I have laid down, and thereby learn to distinguish solid Truth from that which has nothing but the false and deceitful Appearance thereof; then Criticism and all the Wit and Ridicule which it occasions, would fall of course. Then also all the Scandal and Reproach which Men of such restless Tempers endeavour to cast upon others, would return and fall upon their own Heads, especially when it should be observed (which many have done already) that nothing is more base or more unbecoming any of the Moderns, especially those that are but upstarts, and even suspected of worse Principles, than without any Shame or Conscience, publicly or before unsettled Youth, to censure and ridicule such Persons as, for their Age, Merits, Sanctity, Authority, and other rare Gifts and Graces, were so highly conspicuous; such as were much honoured and esteemed by all the wise and holy Men of their own times; such as all

after

after Ages have had a great Veneration for; and finally such as handled and explained the Holy Scriptures with no other design nor view, but only to promote the Glory of God and the Salvation of Men. Such venerable Persons are neither a fit Subject nor proper Matter for Ridicule; and indeed whoever gives himself the Liberty to practice his Talents that way upon them, not only does a thing that ought to be abhorred by all good Men, but also, especially if it be habitual to him, very plainly discovers, the Marks and Tokens of a mean and degenerate Soul in himself. For habitual Mockery proceeds from Impiety, Dishonesty, Pride, Envy, Hatred, Revenge, Cruelty, Malice and Hypocrisy, which are such Dispositions of Soul; as above all others are most abominable in the sight of God. The *Impiety* and *Dishonesty* of such Scoffers evidently appears, in that for trifles of no moment they do not scruple to ridicule such things as were spoken in the greatest sincerity of Heart, and which really contribute to excite in us good Desires and Inclinations to Praise and Love and serve God; and for that they expose the Authors of such things; not only to the Laughter, but to the Hatred, and even to the Curses of all the World. *Pride* is the Mother of Ridicule, when the Mind puffed up with Self-love, and admiring every thing of its own, slights and contemns every thing that another possesses; and being envious and fearful, or seeing that other things are preferred to its own, it endeavours, by ridiculing them, to hinder that it should be so; little considering, that the sober part of Mankind will look upon it as nothing but the effect of the most Ridiculous Pride and Envy, to admire and esteem himself upon the Account of some frivolous Grammatical, Critical and Historical Niceties, of no solid use; and at the same time to despise and vilify others, who have delivered many Excellent, Divine and Solid Truths, and who deserve infinitely better of Mankind than himself. So that hereby the scoffer shews that he is not animated with Love to his Neighbours as he ought, but that he *hates* them; and in order to take his *Revenge* of them, he takes care not only to wound them to the Heart with his bitter Taunts and biting Jests, and to make them sensible that he despises them, and looks upon them as Fools; but that he may do it with more Cruelty, and create as much uneasiness and pain as possible, in those whom he Traduces, he takes

all

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all ways to let them see that they are also out of favour and esteem with others, and that the World not only does not Pity (which is what it seldom denies to any sufferer) but even rejoices with him and insults over them. Who would not choose to be rather openly attack'd by a declar'd Enemy, than covertly and under the insidious pretence of Peace and Tranquility to be thus prick'd and stabb'd to Death? In the first case one sees that he is not altogether despised as nothing; and as he has the Liberty, so every Body is willing to hear what he can say in his own Defence; but in the latter, he only sees that he is despised, and he appears almost ridiculous to others whenever he complains of the Injury done him, or thinks of defending himself; that this kind of Mischief is of all others the hardest to bear, they know full well who use it. Whence the premeditated *Malice* of such as use these Methods is also very evident, especially when the scoffer first invents some Absurdities, and then so dextrously manages the matter as to make his Readers think, that not himself but the Person whom he pretends to give an Account of, is the Author of them; this wicked Artifice of his own he sees and admires, and secretly rejoices in it, while at the same time he preserves and keeps on the *Hypocritical Mask* and Title of a Just, Moderate and Honest Man, before the World; and all this, because that in venting his Spite and Malice, he neither shows any Perturbation of Mind, nor uses any uncouth Expressions, but with great sedateness of thought and dexterity of Language, he so artfully blends and mixes the deadly Poison, sometimes with the shew of Praise, then with an Apology for his Adversary, and other whiles with some little Narrative or other, that 'tis generally received and swallowed without the least pain or reluctance, and then indeed, as the Pharisees did of old, he is pleased in that he sees that others look upon him as an Honest, modest Man, and as one that knows how to govern his Passions; and he despises and mocks at those who either out of Zeal or Passion are stir'd up to utter passionate, or possibly reproachful Words, when yet he himself had given the Provocation; but in the sight of God those who are guilty of Impiety, Disingenuity, Pride, Hatred, Revenge, Cruelty, Malice and Hypocrisy are more abominable than open and gross sinners; and these are preferred to them in God's Account. Now, Sir,

Sir, if these Things have not taken too deep a Root in you, or if you are not yet sufficiently aware of the danger of them, I pray God that he would shew you them in their true and dreadful Colours, that so you may either be reclaimed, or hindred from falling into that precipice to which almost all your Writings shew a very strong Tendency, especially those wherein you have written against others, or where you speak of those who differ from your Opinions, and more particularly if they happen to contradict any of your *Socinian* or *Pelagian* Tenets. For all that you write upon such occasions are so filled with tacit and sly Reflexions against them, that though a less attentive Reader may not mind them, yet to those that see further into your Design, you thereby raise and gratify that Spirit of Envy and Detraction against them, which by Reason of the universal Corruption of human Nature, lies lurking secretly in all Men; so that they can scarce forbear from shewing their Contempt, not only of those whom you expose, but even of all other Readers, who by Reason of their simplicity (or less censorious Dispositions) were not aware of such malignant and invidious Insinuations. Indeed to use some innocent Jest or witty Sayings in matters of little or no moment, and even upon some other occasions, such as to reclaim vicious Men, by making them ashamed of their evil Practices, provided it be done with out breach of mutual Charity, I see no harm therein; and we see that the Interests of Vertue are often supported and promoted by such means; and indeed supposing that a good Man should happen to be sometimes mistaken therein, he might possibly be excused. But to Exercise such a Talent in and about matters of Religion, and upon sincere and devout Men, to render them ridiculous to others, and to make it ones constant custom to do so, this is not only unbecoming the Character of a Christian but even of an honest Man. Those (a) honest and worthy Persons who have sifted your Writings, examined your pleasant Criticisms and observed your strange Temerity in matters of Faith and Religion; (b) those who have Condemned your Criticks as rash, impious and prophane; those who have shewn that your Writings are for the most part filled with Opinions favouring (c) *Arianism*, *Pelagianism* and *Libertinism*; such Persons, I say, have sometimes and by the by taken occasion from your own Absurdities to banter and laugh at you, but generally they have

(a) M. Abbad. Verite de la Relig. Chr. I. P. ch. 9. Du Pin, Bibl. Eccl. P. 1. diff. prel. p. 38.
(b) Vid. Wirsi Misc. Sacra. cap. 14. 18. 22.
(c) Ibid. p. done 345.

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done it, because you was the Aggressor and provoked them to it. But of them all only Father *Simon*, whom at every turn you used to play upon, has taken you at your own Weapons, and paid you so fully home, that from hence forward you ought to leave him Master of the Field. Whether many Others will follow his Example I know not. As to Backbiting and Ridicule the case is much the same as in Murder or any other Injury; it is not lawful to attack any one; but to repay the Aggressor in his own Coin, seems to be excusable, provided care be taken to guard sufficiently against Revenge, and the other above-mentioned Vices; which in this corrupted State that we are now in, is, I fear, very difficult, if not impossible.

LIV. That there are more Things in Mr. Le Clerc's own Writings which deserve to be exposed and laughed at, than he has observed in others. And in particular he is often guilty of Contradictions.

This he endeavours to reconcile Pelagianism and Socinianism with Christianity. To limit Metaphysics; To calumniate the Fathers;

LIV. Therefore should any of those whom you have thus abused, or who cannot bear to see Holy Men exposed publicly to ridicule, draw their Pens also against you, either to ward off and return your blows, or to shew you your own Absurdities, I believe none of them would choose to do it after so base a manner as I have just now mentioned, tho' possibly they might find matter enough in your Writings to carp and laugh at: Not only because they abound with Things Copied from others, with many inconsiderable Trifles, and with Things that are vain and indifferent in themselves, in all which cases jests might be more Innocently used; but also because that to all your other Blunders you frequently add that ridiculous one, which they call a *Contradiction*. For my Part, not to be tedious, I shall only take notice here of three or four Things, which upon a Transient view I could not but observe in your Writings, and which methinks are nothing but downright Contradictions: Such as, First, to incorporate and reconcile *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism*, to and with Christianity (possibly that they at last may succeed in the place thereof.) Secondly, to limit and restrain *Metaphysics*; (under which Head when you have included the chief Mysteries of Religion, and such as are most opposite to the *Socinian* Principles, you may then with the less Disgrace expunge them wholly out of your Creed.) Thirdly, to calumniate and defame St. *Augustin* and all the Fathers (as for instance, to say, that they maintained *Trisheism*.) And to expose them to the Mockery and Contempt of the World, under pretence that they were not so accurate as they ought to have been in some

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Some smaller matters (but indeed to lessen and undermine their Credit and Authority, which otherwise would go a great way to put a stop to the growth of *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism*, to both which, in all their Writings, they shew the greatest Horror and Aversion.) Fourthly, to commend Critical and other Parts of Human Learning, as highly deserving our regard, and as necessary means to the right understanding Divine Matters (which being substituted in the room of the Divine Illumination and other Operations of the Spirit of God, this alone Foundation of *Socinianism* may remain safe and unshaken.) Now by the first of these, you make it indifferent to Salvation, whether a Christian have any Object, namely, the Son of God and the Holy Spirit, for the chief Foundation of his Faith, Hope and Salvation, and for the Object of his highest Love and Adoration; or whether he look upon the same Object as a Creature, which can neither be the Foundation of his Faith, Hope and Salvation, nor the Object of his highest Love and Adoration. Moreover you make it indifferent to a Christian, or to a true and living Member of *Christ's* Body, whether he partake of the Spirit of the Head and Body, and of the Life and internal Operations thereof, or whether he want that Spirit and its internal Operations in himself, and stand in no need of them, as the Modern *Pelagians* affirm? That is, that 'tis indifferent to a living Member to be animated by the Head and Spirit of the Body, or to be without them? That 'tis indifferent to a living Person, whether he has in him the Principles of Life or not, and consequently whether he be dead or alive. All which are manifest Contradictions. As to the second, whereby you mean not to destroy but to reform *Metaphysics*, among many other obscure and confused Notions, where you wander here and there without any Light or Coherence, and mix and confound Things of a Metaphysical Nature with matters of Faith and Sense, you say, * That three parts in four of *Metaphysics* might be taken away, — * *Entret. p. 233.* If *Metaphysical* Disquisitions were limited to such Things as are necessary to Salvation. Again, † That God has let us into the Knowledge of Things of a Metaphysical Nature, so far as is necessary to our Salvation, or to the end for which he Created us. But all agree, and you will hardly deny it, that the Metaphysical Knowledge of Things, as such, is not necessary to Salvation: For then what would become of the Generality of the World who know nothing of such Matters? a little after you

And to commend Criticism.

How Mr. Le Clerc contradicts himself as to the first Instance.

As to the Second.

* *Entret. p. 233.*

† *Ibid. p. 277.*

Letter L you say, *Whatever is necessary, is so plain, that all Men may know it. And that therefore Metaphysicians whenever they have attempted to teach us any thing about this Matter, they have Taught us either nothing that is new, or at least nothing that is essential.* Where, by the first Words, you seem to acknowledge, and by these last, to destroy all Metaphysical Knowledge. Which is again a Contradiction. In the third particular, you also Contradict your self. You are not Ignorant that the Fathers very often and in the most express Words cleared themselves from the Imputation of Trithaism. You acknowledge more than once in your Writings, "that *

He also contradicts himself in the third Particular.

* In Dis. de Arg. to ab Invidiam ducto.

n. 11.

Bibl. Cholfie.

Tom. iv. p.

375, 376, &c.

† Sentim. P.

15, 16.

"Consequences or Corollaries, whether well or ill deduced from the Principles of an Adversary, neither can nor ought, but out of Malice and Envy, be imputed to him, that openly and expressly disavows them." And yet almost every where in your Writings, you go on and charge the Ancient Fathers with Trithaism. When, I pray, may one, one that is conscious to himself of this Fraudulent and Invidious way of acting, be said to contradict himself, if not in this Case? Finally, you acknowledge in one Place † that the Holy Penmen had so little regard to style, that almost every where there occurs Obscurities, which cannot be cleared up by all the Rules of Grammar. — That Grammar and Criticks are of no use but where we know the scope and design of the Author. You affirm, that the meauer fort, and such as make the best use they can of their Understanding, may learn from the Scriptures all that is necessary to Salvation; namely, to believe in God and keep his Commandments. Now without doubt you will allow that St. Augustin was at least one of the weaker fort, who by reading the Scriptures might learn this essential and necessary Point. And you cannot but know that his Design in Instructing the People over whom he was placed, as well as in all his Writings, was to Interpret the Scriptures so as to teach and ground them in the essentials, in Faith towards God, and in Obedience to his Commands; but not to make them Learned Criticks; and yet you very frequently exclaim against him, and other Holy Fathers, as if for Men of their Characters, they were the worst and most ridiculous Interpreters of Scripture, because forsooth they neglected to Mind the niceties of Grammar and Criticism; so that you reproach them for no other cause, but only because they either knew not or willfully slighted those Things, which even by your own Confession, is very usual with the

Sacred

Letter I.

Sacred Writers themselves: Which is the more unjust in you, because they looked upon the Illumination of the Holy Spirit as absolutely necessary in order to understand aright the scope and meaning of any of the Sacred Writers, which they earnestly Prayed for, and sometimes acknowledged that they had obtained it. So that upon the whole, 'tis evident that in all these Things you plainly contradict your self; much after the same manner as when, *Fourthly*, you commend I don't know how many sorts of Human and Profane Learning, Arts, Languages, various Readings, Critical and Historical Observations, &c. To employ and wholly take up our Mind about, altho' it be a Thing that is manifestly contrary both to that part of our Nature, which can only be satisfied with Things Eternal, and not with such barren and empty Amusements; and to Experience, which shews that those who think they have most Reason to boast of such vain and empty Accomplishments, are at a much greater distance than others from the alone Fountain of all solid Truth and true Holiness, the Spirit of God, and from possessing, or hoping and desiring to possess and enjoy him; and even to *Liberius* (that is to your self) where in your Theological Epistles you condemn every thing, as coming of Imperfection, which *does not make us more Holy and more Happy*; under which Head all your Critical Learning, with all the Idle Fooleries relating thereto, must undoubtedly be placed, unless you would exalt it above our Saviour, and by a new sort of Apotheosis, call Criticism not an Happy and Holy, but a Beatifick and Sanctifying Art or Science. The express Words of *Liberius* are these; * 'Tis an Imperfection to know such Things as are unprofitable; and to spend our Time in Learning those Sciences which neither make us Holier nor Happier. O how many, according to this Rule, make it their Business to study in order to become daily more Imperfect, and do all they can to persuade others to do the like! I will not enlarge in this Place to shew how unworthily they treat the Scriptures who think that they must be expounded by such Arts and Means as these: I'll venture however to say, that should any Critick, qualified according to your Instructions, and observing your Rules only, undertake to give us an Interpretation or Exposition of the Holy Scriptures, instead of giving us the Marrow and Substance, he would only present us

And in the Fourth.

* *Liberius* p. 125.

Letter I.

The Consequences of Interpreting the Scriptures by Criticism, &c.

with the outward literal and superficial Appearance, with the Dead Body of the Letter, not only without, but against and in contradiction to the Spirit; and which would destroy the Life and Power thereof in us, and bring upon us a Deadly Contagion and Indolence. An Indolence, I say, should Criticism let Mens Minds loose from the fear and apprehension of all the dreadful Judgments, Plagues, Slaughters and Scourges, which God out of his infinite Love has in Holy Writ foretold and threatned to pour out upon Mankind in these last Days, in order to awaken them out of their deadly Security, which seem now to be the only means left to raise and excite in Men Hopes and Desires after Things Eternal; or should it most Wickedly insinuate or inculcate that all the admirable Promises in Scripture of Divine Gifts are long since past and fulfilled, and consequently that none in these latter times either has or ought to expect the like; I say, such a Critical Interpretation, should it take away our Fears and destroy our Hopes, those great and powerful Motives to Repentance and a Good Life, it could not chuse but affect Mankind with a most dangerous Indolence: And the Contagion would be every whit as bad, seeing in interpreting the Scriptures every thing in them that should have been considered as Types of better Things, and which besides the literal meaning should have been applied to the spiritual State of Souls and to the Internal Operations of God in them, would be Expounded after such a brutal, carnal, literal and superficial manner, that the true divine scope and meaning of those Sacred Writings would be wholly left out and rejected: So that nothing can be a more pernicious Contradiction to the Scriptures, or more opposite to the Duty and Office of a Good Interpreter, than to use and rely upon such Explications and Commentaries: And we ought to beseech God to root out and bring to nought the Errors and ill effects which such Interpretations may have already created and fomented in Men's Minds; and that by the powerful and preventing Influences of his Grace, he would keep the rest of Mankind from falling into them for the future.

LV. The Right way of shewing Men their Errors and Mistakes.

LV. These, and such like Errors, and indeed every other mistake which any one does commit, are better shewn and corrected in a meek and friendly way, than in Bitterness and Anger. But the best way of all for any one to be convinced of his Errors, or of any other Evil, is, either upon the Advice of others, or in Obedience

Letter I.

Obedience to the secret Direction of his own Conscience, to recollect himself inwardly, and there to implore the only instructor of Souls, the Author of all true Knowledge and Light, the blessed and adorable Spirit of God, whose Light, Gifts, Operations, and other Effusions are promised in a thousand Places of Scripture, especially in those Times, in which Darknels, Iniquity, Error and Impiety abound, as in the last Times, which we are either in, or so very near, that 'tis evident nothing can be more, than he would vouchsafe to enlighten his Understanding, and lead him into the Paths of Truth. We must take care only that we be not of the number of those, or suffer ourselves to be seduced by them, of whom the Apostle forewarn'd us, when he said, (a) *That there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own Lusts, and saying, where is the Promise of his Coming? They walk after their own Lusts, who will not admit, believe, nor hope for any thing relating to Divine Myteries, but what their shallow Understanding can comprehend, and what is agreeable to their corrupt* *whom we are to beware of.* *Tast, and natural Comprehension: The Scoffers at the Promises of the Lord, are such as by Reason of their Incredulity deny the Presence and Grace, and the Internal and Quickening Operations of God's Holy Spirit; such as laugh at the Gifts of Illumination and all other Divine helps and assistances, and say that we have no ground to hope for such Things, altho' the Omnipotent himself, who cannot Lie, has expressly promised them; the Scoffers at the coming of the Lord, are those who do not expect that he will come to Instruct, Renew and Govern all things by the Effusion of his Spirit, which he will pour out upon all flesh; which shall form or create new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein Righteousness may dwell, when he shall destroy by Fire the Scoffers themselves, and purge the World from all its Corruption. And then* (b) *Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that thou bearest unto thy People: O visit me with thy Salvation, that I may see the felicity of thy chosen; and reioice in the gladness of thy People, and give thanks with thine Inheritance.* — May the Lord quicken our Souls in the hope of his Grace and Salvation, and enable us by the help of his Divine Light seriously to examine our own Hearts, (c) *Least there should be in any of us an evil for Heart of Unbelief, to depart from the living God; and* (c) *Heb. 3. 12* *least we should be hardened through the deceitfulness of* *in*

Letter I.

The end proposed in this Letter.

(a) 1 Pet. 2.

If Mr. Le Clerc will not take the Advice here offered.

But continues to write against Mr. Polier.

Instead of a more particular Answer.

sin, and be of the number of those who because of their unbelief could not enter into his Rest. That God would grant this Mercy to us all; and to you, Sir, in particular, is what from the very bottom of my Soul I most sincerely wish and pray for; as also that he would enable you to see, that all that I have said, is with no other Design but only for your real good; and that it may have the intended effect with you and others, which is, to remove those Obstacles which hinder the Communication and Progress of Divine Truth, Grace and Glory among Men; so that laying aside these things, (a) and all Malice, and all Guile and Hypocrisies, and Envy and all evil speakings, and all our trifling Studies and worldly Views and Interests, we may as new born Babes desire that intellectual Milk of Divine Wisdom, which is sincere and uncorrupted with human Mixtures, That we may grow thereby, tasting how bountiful and gracious the Lord is, To whom coming as unto a living Stone and Foundation of all true Wisdom and Erudition, though disallowed indeed of Men, yet chosen of God and Precious, we also as living Stones polished and taught by him, may be built up a spiritual House, wherein the holy and adorable Spirit of the Father and Son may dwell for ever. This, when it shall come to be your case as well as mine with many others, let us bless and praise the Omnipotent Instructor and Renewer of Souls, in whose Love we shall from thence forth rejoice for ever. So that afterwards I hope you will cease from Treating or Representing any thing relating to Religion, otherwise than shall be consistent with Truth, Justice and Charity. But if instead of complying with this Advice (than which I hope for better things of you) you should rather choose to stick to your former Method; I'll endeavour nevertheless to observe my own Rules, whereof one is not to undertake any more to convince those who deceive and impose upon themselves and others; but rather not to mind them, and to leave them wholly to themselves. They may then for me continue to speak and write as much as they please, in the Element of Deceit and Deceit; and should it happen that any thing should come out hereafter against me, either in the continuation of the *Bibliothèque*, or in any other Book, instead of any other Answer, I shall only desire the Reader to peruse the following Passage, and according to the Tenor thereof to remember, that he ought not readily to believe every thing that another says,

says, unless he be first very well assured of his Honesty and Integrity.

Letter I.

Reflections upon Father Simon's Critical History, Pag. 71.

Indeed 'tis what gives us a great deal of trouble, that we can so little rely on the credit of Translators and of Quotations; and that there is so little Faith in the Re-
publique of Letters. that we must treat Authors, as others do those who have been formerly convicted of Perjury, at least if we would not run the hazard of being imposed upon every moment. We must examine them nicely, and continually compare Translations and EXTRACTS with their Originals, if we would not be lead into Error upon the credit of those Gentlemen. You have without doubt heard of a certain famous Wrangler, called Hear-say, who kept a School to bred up Evidences in, and out of which are gone forth so great a number of false Witnesses. But, Sir, those People know nothing in comparison of an infinite number of Authors, who upon every occasion say, such a one, or such a one said things which he never thought of, and at the same time make solemn Protestations that they speak nothing but the Naked Truth.

The Reader is desired to consider this Quotation.

CONSIDERATIONS and REMARKS upon it

The

say, unless he be first well assured of his liberty and integrity.

Reflections upon Father Simon's Circular History, Pag. 71.

Indeed, it is not a great deal of trouble, that we can do little else, but the credit of Testimony and of Quakers; and that there is so little Faith in the Re- The Author is publisher of Letters, that we will have others, and others bound to say. An idle who have been formerly considered of being impudently. If it we would not run the hazard of being impudently. upon every moment. We will examine them much, and continually compare Testimonies, and X I R H O S with their Originals, if we would not be led into Error upon the credit of those Gentlemen. You have without doubt heard of a certain famous Minister, called Hearsey, who kept a School to teach up Methodism in, and out of which are gone forth to plant a number of the Ministers. But, as the Lord knows nothing in comparison of an infinite number of ministers, who upon every occasion say such a word, or such a thing, which would be more than of, and in the same time make solemn Testimonies that they hear nothing but the Naked Truth.

The AUTHOR's
ANSWER
TO
Parrhasius's CENSURE.
WITH
CONSIDERATIONS and
REMARKS upon it.

THE AUTHOR'S
ANSWER
TO
Parrish's CENSURE
WITH
CONSIDERATIONS and
REMARKS upon it.



Parrhasius's Censure.

I Know not in what view or with what Intention Mr. *Le Clerc*, read the foregoing Letter; but after several Years silence, there has at last appeared one that calls himself *Theodorus Parrhasius*, who in his *Parrhasiana*, written in French, has inserted the following Paragraph in favour of Mr. *Le Clerc*. The several Particulars of which, I have here distinguish'd in a Numerical order, the Numbers whereof refer to the particular Remarks which I intend to subjoyn, after having first set down the Censure itself, and then premised some General Considerations upon it. The Tenor of the Censure is this.

Theodorus Parrhasius, in his *Parrhasiana* Page 383.

" Among those that have (1.) unjustly complain-
" ed of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, Written by Mr.
" *Le Clerc*, we may reckon Mr. *Poirer*, 2 (2.) follow-
" er of *Antonia Bourignon*, who being provoked by one
" little (3.) Jest upon his *Divine Oeconomy*, set him-
" self (4.) beyond measure against Mr. *Le Clerc*, not
" only in a shorter Paper, which he caused to be in-
" serted in the *Repub. de Lettres*, for the Year 1687.
" But also some Years after in a larger Epistle, full of Gall
" and Malice, which he published at the end of his Book
" of *Solid Erudition*, without acquainting his Book-
" seller, who was not at all pleased therewith. Mr.
" *Le*

- (5.) " *Le Clerc* thought, there was no occasion to (5.) an-
 (6.) " swer that Letter, seeing *Mr. Poiret's* (6.) Dreams
 " (or Fancies) are so well known, that for a great
 " while he has not been able to do any harm; altho'
 " in that Letter he has omitted nothing in order to
 (7.) " (7.) defame *Mr. Le Clerc*. But if he was to be
 " blamed at all, it was because he reflected too slight-
 (8.) " ly upon a Work (or Book) which (8.) deserved the
 (9.) " severest Censure, as (9.) exposing all Religion to
 " Mockery and Contempt from the beginning to the end,
 " I as much as he turns it into mere Fanaticism. *Mr.*
 (10.) " *Poiret* thinks that all the (10.) Fooleries of the
 (11.) " Mysticks, and all the Chimera's which he thinks
 " fit to add to them, ought to be received as (11.)
 " Oracles, when he ought rather to be ashamed for
 (12.) " (12.) making it his Business so long to seduce hon-
 (13.) " nest, well-meaning People by the (13.) ridiculous
 " Notions which he has published relating to Spiritu-
 (14.) " al Matters. The Fanatical (14.) Expressions of
 " the Mysticks, can only deceive either those who are
 (15.) " (15.) bent upon deceiving themselves, or who in-
 (16.) " stead of Religion (16.) take up with empty Imagi-
 (17.) " nations for Good Manners, founded upon the (17.)
 " Hope of another Life proposed in the Gospel. As
 " to those who know of what Importance 'tis to
 (18.) " (18.) Love their Neighbour, they will take suffici-
 (19.) " ent care not to be imposed upon by *Mr. Poiret's*
 " Extratic (19.) Devotion, which is consistent with
 " the blindest Malice. A remarkable Instance of his
 " dissingenuity appears in that Apology which he
 " makes with so much care for *St. Augustin*, about
 (20.) " (20.) Opinions which even he infinitely abhors
 " himself, viz. Absolute Predestination, and Irresist-
 (21.) " ible Grace, only to render *Mr. Le Clerc* (21.) odi-
 " ous if he could. The like may be said of the Ex-
 " plication which he gives of the Epistle written
 " by that Father to *Vincentius*, wherein he would
 (22.) " have it that (22.) *St. Augustin* did not hold that
 " Persecution was Lawful; as if no Body but he
 " had *St. Augustin's* Works to read the Letter itself.
 " If *Mr. Poiret* will not apply himself to study Criti-
 (24.) " cism, (24.) which he pretends he despises, he ought
 (23.) " not to presume to speak of those Things (23.) which
 " he does not understand. This Censure, 'tis true,
 (25.) " will yet seem more (25.) severe upon him; but he
 " must own that he has brought it justly upon him-
 " self; nor would I have him imagine that there
 " is

- " is any (26.) design (in Mr. *Le Clerc*.) to enter the (26.)
 " Lifts with him. He only seeks disputes, (27.) that, (27.)
 " it he could, he might be talked of, and by that
 " means promote the Sale of his Books, which (28.) no (28.)
 " Body reads. So that as to that matter Mr. *Le*
 " *Clerc* will give him no opportunity to do himself
 " any Service that way. He Consents, that if any
 " one has so much time upon his Hands, and thinks
 " fit to (30.) throw it away in reading that Letter, (30.)
 " that he form a Judgment of the same, (29.) by (29.)
 " comparing it with those Things which Mr. *Poires*
 " opposes, without any other Answer.

AND

First, Some more "General Considerations
 concerning the State and Importance of
 the Controversy.

THESE are the Considerations which I have
 to offer to the Reader in regard
 to the Controversy between Mr. *Le Clerc*
 and Mr. *Poires*. I have not thought
 proper to enter into the Dispute
 itself, but to consider the State
 and Importance of the Controversy
 in general. I have not thought
 proper to enter into the Dispute
 itself, but to consider the State
 and Importance of the Controversy
 in general.



I. The main-
 arg and prop-
 of the Parha-
 than Controversy.

REMARKS

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 in general.

REMARKS

Upon the foregoing

CENSURE:

AND

First, Some more general Considerations concerning the State and Importance of the Controversy.

I. *The meaning and scope of the Parrhasian Cenſure.*

I.



Must desire the Reader to consider whether he can gather any Light or Instruction from so Indigested and Injurious a Rapsody of Words, or even whether they can collect so much as the Historical meaning of the Controversy from them; so

General and Confused are *Parrhasius's* Clamours, that they neither shew the Importance of the matter, nor the State of the Question, nor so much as touch upon the Merits of the Cause; but are only Indications of an Angry Spirit, and full of that disdain and assurance, wherewith false Learning usually puffs up Mens Minds. Should the Reader be able to find out any thing relating to the Subject matter in Question, from his Words, it must be this, that neither Mr. *Le Clerc*, nor *Parrhasius* (who, if we may believe common Report, are both one) approves of Things *Mystical* and *Spiritual*; nor of the Authors who have treated of them, viz. The *Mystical Writers*, *St. Austin*, and their Admirers, nor of *Poiret* himself: Then, That Mr. *Le Clerc* has good Reasons why he disapproves of them, and that he could easily confute both them and their Books; But, thirdly, that he will keep them to himself, and not publish them, least thereby he should make his Adversaries, who are otherwise but

but obscure Persons, more known and illustrious. So that *Parrhasius's* drift seems to be this, to vilify the Books of his Adversaries, and those which he calls Mystical, and Spiritual, in order to frighten his Readers from looking into them, although they know nothing of the matter, that so they may apply themselves wholly to the Study of Mr. *Le Clerc's* own Books, and readily give into all his and *Parrhasius's* Notions and Opinions.

II. But I'll do all that lies in my Power to frustrate such an ill design. As to the Reproaches which he loads me with, I'll let them melt away like Hail, wishing that God upon his Repentance may mercifully pardon him. I'll endeavour also to return Good for Evil, and what I have to say, shall have as near a relation to true *Erudition*, as any thing I have advanced in those Books which professedly treat of the Subject. In the first place then, I shall shew more at large the Nature and Importance of the Subject matter, which *Parrhasius* has concealed least it should be rightly known, because it is the first and chiefest of all, and I shall deduce it from the beginning; and afterward I shall subjoin Particular Remarks and Reflections upon the several Heads of the Censure, in the same Numerical Order as I have distinguished them above.

II. Which shall not be confuted by clamours but by solid Reasons and a clear Explication of the things themselves.

III. As the ground work of what I intend to offer, I shall lay down the following Propositions.

III. The ground work of what follows.

1. Every one that has not quite stifled, or that does not absolutely resist the inward Motions, and natural Propensions of his own Heart, (even *Parrhasius* and Mr. *Le Clerc*) seeks after and tends to the chief and supreme end, though perhaps not so strongly, nor so often, nor in so particular a manner as he ought.

2. The chief end of Man is Eternal Life.

3. God alone is the cause of all good, especially of that which is Salutory and Eternal.

4. Men are now of themselves corrupt, and that both as to their real Faculties, (whether spiritual, such as the Will and Understanding, &c. or Corporal) and as to that Ideal Faculty of Reason, whereby they form Ideas of Things, and dispose of them several ways. That Man is in all these respects corrupt, I have sufficiently Demonstrated, so far as relates to our purpose, (a) when I treated of the Method of finding Truth.

(a) Part I. §.

35.

§. I

§. I suppose yet farther, That Man, corrupt as he is, is yet so far restored by God, that he is free not indeed to cause or produce good of himself, but to admit and receive it when offer'd to him by the cause thereof; and that he is, also at liberty to refuse and reject it. And this we have at large and in several Places demonstrated elsewhere *.

* Vid. *Oecon. Div.* Vol. iii. Chap. vi. §. 10.

These grounds being laid down, we will now come nearer to the Point, and enquire first, and that more generall, how Men could govern themselves with respect to these things: And in doing this, we shall find ourselves obliged to reduce the whole matter to two ways, or to two Principal Heads.

IV. The Origin and first Principle of true and false Religion.

IV. Thus, for Instance, if we consider Man as endeavouring and aspiring after his chief and supreme End, and that he is perswaded that Life Eternal is that end, he will either immediately make use of his real and inward Faculties, viz. The Heart, Soul and Understanding, in order to obtain the same, and that in its own Cause, or in God the cause and Author of all Good, and to him he will surrender his Desire, his Understanding, and all the other Faculties of his Mind, that he may produce and accomplish that Life in him: Or he will make use of the shadowy Faculty of Reason, wherein he will form some sort of Idea of Life Eternal, according to the Disposition of his own dark and corrupt Reason, and in order to seek after and obtain this imaginary Life, he will apply himself to the same Faculty of Reason, for Light, to teach him what that Life is, and what are the ways and means of attaining it; to afford him strength to govern his Affections and Inferiour Faculties, and so to render him worthy of Life Eternal, about which notwithstanding he is so very little Solicitous, That he spends the greatest Part of his Life about perishable and (not to say worse) vain and Empty Trifles.

V. The True, Real, Divine or Christian Religion, what?

V. The first of these ways of living and acting constitutes *Divine Religion*; or which is the same thing, 'Tis that wherein the Substance of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION consists, which is to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, or to yield up all our real and true Faculties to God, the Author, and the worker of all Good, of all Light, of all Happiness and Salvation; to whom therefore is ascribed

ascribed all Love, Honour and Glory for ever and ever.

VI. The other, constitutes *Philosophical or Rational, Ideal, and Counterfeit Religion*, and at this time, makes that which we may call GENTILE CHRISTIANITY; That is, 'tis the Art or Practice of Raising and Forming to ones self by the Activity of his own Reason, Ideas and Pictures of things Divine, of Reasoning about them, and of governing and Restraining the outward Faculties whereby we correspond and converse with the rest of Mankind, so as becomes honest Men, and as those that excell the Beasts in the Exercise of Reason and in the Government of this World, who therefore highly value and esteem the Industry, Power and Activity of their Reason, and Glory in the same, and thereby greatly flatter and Indulge Self-love in themselves.

VII. To the first sort belonged in all Ages all Holy Souls, especially the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and all the Penmen of the Holy Scriptures: JESUS CHRIST himself and his Apostles, all the faithful of the Primitive Church, all the first Doctors and Fathers thereof, and especially the Renowned St. *Austin*: All the Mystical Divines, and finally all others who have been endued with solid Knowledge, or that have deserved the Name of Christians.

VIII. To the other sort belonged among the Jews, the Saducees; among the Gentiles, not a few of the Philosophers, especially those of whom St. *Paul* speaks in the first Chapter of the *Romans*; and among those who have (undeservedly) born the Name of Christians, all those who are fill'd and puffed up with false, or rather with meer superficial Learning only: Those that are called *Pelagians*, to whom in these latter Days another Sect called *Socinians* have joined themselves; and in short all the Trumpeters and Advocates of Heathenish, Philosophical, Logical or Rational and Ideal, and Counterfeit Christianity; who although they Study the Holy Scriptures, and appeal to them, yet they draw nothing from them but what relates to the Faculty of Reason, viz. Dry Ideas accommodated to the Capacity and Taste of their own blind Reason, and governed and disposed according to the Rules of their own blind Philology.

As for my own part, I have, as far as God has enabled me, endeavoured in the sincerity of my Heart in all my Writings to serve the Interests of true Religion.

VI. The false, Ideal and Philosophical Religion what?

VII. The followers of Real and True Religion.

VIII. The followers of Ideal and Philosophical Religion.

(a) J. Goulet
 consider.
 Theol. p. 5.

IX. The True
 and only cause
 of the Difference
 between
 me and Mr.
 Le Clerc and
 the Author of
 the Parrhasi-
 ana.

X. The Im-
 portance of the
 subject matter
 in debate.

XI. Life Eter-
 nal what, and
 wherein it
 consists.

on, and to recommend and promote the same in the World: But Mr. Le Clerc, seems to have made it his sole aim in all his Writings, to propagate the other, and to expose the first to all the Contempt and Ridicule that he could think of: For although he shews himself almost every where in his Books, to be a great master of Human Learning, yet 'tis evident, to use the words of a late Divine of (a) Groningen, That he makes use of that stock of Learning only by way of cover or safe conduct, that he may the better introduce his Corruptions into Divinity.

IX. And this indeed is the *Punctum Saliens*, as I may say, the Original Cause and the true Ground of the Difference between him and me; this is the true Reason of all that horror which he has conceived both against the real Operations of God upon our Internal Faculties (which he calls Fanaticism) and against the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church, against St. *Justin* especially, yea, and against the Mysticks, and also against me. And seeing all these Consequences appear clearly from *Parrhasius's* Censure; we have here the cause *a priori*, of that Declamation, which otherwise would appear a confused, indigested and unreasonable Rapsody of Words.

Having thus opened the State of the Case, let us now consider what may be the Importance thereof.

X. If the Controversy was about a matter of little moment, or about any thing which concerned my self only, I should then hold my Tongue, nor would I suffer the Readers to distract their Minds, or waste their time about a matter of no use or Importance. But the Dispute is indeed about a matter of the greatest Importance, and which concerns all and every Man, without excepting any.

The Controversy is about Life, Salvation, and Eternal Happiness, and about the Efficient and Operating Cause thereof, without which true and only cause, all Men would of necessity be deprived of Happiness, the Effect thereof.

XI. Life Eternal, is what concerns us all to mind, 'tis our proper Business; and as we are created for this end, so ought we to endeavour after the true Knowledge thereof, and of the Cause, and of the means which we must use in order to attain the same. What it is, is evident to any one that considers the matter from the Terms themselves. Life, That which is truly and properly Life, That which is truly and solidly Eternal and Happy, cannot consist with-
 out

out the alone Fountain of Life and Happiness, and of all Good. It necessarily includes then a Communion and Union with that Fountain, that is, with God, who seeing he is an infinitely immense Spirit, and is originally the one and only Good, it evidently follows that LIFE ETERNAL consists in the fruition of God, dwelling in us, Manifesting and communicating himself, and living and acting in us, and filling us with infinite and eternal Joys.

XII. As God created Man at first by his Word (or Son) and Holy Spirit, he was not immediately put in possession of Eternal Life, but had only the first Principles thereof Implanted in him; there was some Intercourse and Communion between him and God, which had he cultivated, and co-operated with them, by offering himself up to God, and turning his real and inward Faculties, viz. his Desires, his Heart, his Understanding and his Affections freely and continually to him, and habituated himself to such Exercises; God on the other hand by his Word and Spirit, would have more and more manifested himself, his Operations, and all other good Things in him, and in his said Faculties, until at last in his own time, he had communicated himself, and every thing in himself to him in the amplest and most consummate manner; So that the same God who first made and planted the Seeds of Life Eternal in Man, and afterwards, upon his corresponding with the same, made them encrease and grow up to Maturity, would have been both the first Efficient and the last Consummating Cause or Author of Life Eternal; for which Reason all the Honour and Glory is due to God alone.

XIII. But now that we are depraved by sin from our very Conception, we are born miserable, not only without those Beginnings and Springs of Eternal Life, which the Word of God that created our first Parent communicated and implanted in him; but all the Superior and more Real Faculties of the Soul are stupified, darkened and pester'd with evil Dispositions, not to mention the like or more deplorable Condition of the inferior Faculties, and especially of the superficial and shadowy Faculty of Reason, and hence it comes that those first beginnings of Life Eternal, which were given in order to the attainment of the fullness thereof, cannot be restored in our Faculties by its cause, unless our now depraved and deadened Faculties be first taken out of that state of Incapacity

XII. How God would have been the cause and Author of Life Eternal in Man, if he had not sinned.

XIII. After sin the depraved Faculties of Man must be renewed, and the Principles of Life Eternal again infused, and that God only can do the same.

(which is very great) and be restored to that first state, or very near it. Finally, who can work such a change in a Man, and renew the inward depraved Faculties of his Soul: Who I say can do this but the Creator of Man and the Former of Souls, the Omnipotent Word of God, or the Son of God, by whom the Father made all things? and after the Faculties are restored and made whole again, who can bestow and infuse the Principles and Seeds of Life Eternal, and at last bestow the fullness thereof upon them, but the Fountain of Eternal Life himself?

XIV. Our Duty as to these things. The Sum of the Christian Religion.

XIV. This being the case, it remains that as to our part, we know that we are placed here in time, in order to imploy the same in preparing and fitting ourselves for Eternal Life; and that this is to be done by curing our said Faculties, and acquiring those Seeds and first Principles of Life Eternal: Now these things we shall do aright and as we ought, if forsaking all useles and evil Thoughts and Occupations, we convert and turn ourselves, our Hearts, and all our superior, inward and more real Faculties (which are the subject of Happiness) to God himself, who made us, and who alone is able both to restore us and to bestow upon us himself and all his Blessings, Praying him, who is the Fountain and Author of all Good, that out of his infinite Mercy and Bounty he would vouchsafe unto us Strength and Light, and Love, in order to enable us to purify and adorn our Hearts, that so, even in this Life, we may possess him, though imperfectly, and by way of beginning at least, and that *Christ* may come unto us, and with the Father and Holy Spirit take up his abode in us, and from hence forward govern and protect us during the remainder of our Life against all the innumerable and powerful Enemies of our Salvation; that so when this Life is finished, he may communicate himself fully to us, and perfect that work which he had before begun and cherished in us. And thus all Honour and Glory will redound to him alone for ever; and this indeed is the sum and substance of the whole Christian Religion.

XV. The Lies which Satan has forged against these things.

What the

XV. But in opposition to these Truths, which are every where inculcated in the Scriptures, the Enemy of our Salvation has for many Ages past broached and propagated his deadly Lies, thereby to do what

Pelagian Heresy is.

he could, to bereave Men of Eternal Happiness. He could not bear to see Men turn their inward and more real Faculties, which pant and hunger after the Divine Irradiations and Operations to God. He has done what in him lay wholly to suppress them. He stirred up the empty Faculty of Reason, and the activity thereof; and thereby put Men upon seeking barren Ideas and painted Images, (the Works of their own Hands, of their Power and Activity) and upon reasoning and disputing about them, that so they might glory in these things, as if they were therefore Gods themselves, or Divine Persons, or as if these their Works and Idols had something Divine in them, as if they were so many Divine Lights, and could contribute to bring those that rely upon them to a Divine State. The same grand Enemy has not permitted them so much as to suspect or imagine that true Life, that Life Eternal for which we were created, is the Possession of God, Dwelling, Living and Operating in us; but only more generally, that 'tis a Life better than this Temporal Life, (which may agree even with the Alcoran) That we are not born so impotent, nor our present degenerate state so unfit for the same as some would have it; that we have no occasion to pray for, or to expect that God should bestow upon us his Strength and Light, or that he should operate in us himself to prepare and fit us for Salvation; and much less that the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit should come to illuminate and govern and protect and live in us; that these are nothing but idle Dreams and mere Fanaticism. That the Faculties of Reasoning and Acting are the chiefest of all, and also sound enough, so that if we improve and exercise them by the means of Logick and Philosophy, and by that literal Knowledge of the Scriptures, which those Sciences will help us to acquire, and then do all that we can to live and practice accordingly, that then we are in a safe way to that better Life which the natural Man has conceived or imagined for himself. Now this is that capital Heresy called *Pelagianism*, the Parent, the Foundation, the Soul and the Life it self of *Socinianism*, so that all the other *Socinian* Errors are but consecratories of this, which like so many Accidents would immediately fall of themselves, if this Poisonous Root, which is as the subject and ground of them all was once extirpated from Mens Minds,

XVI. No Error can be more dangerous; seeing it is inconsistent with the attainment of Life Eternal.

XVI. Now the Danger of this Error is so great that nothing can be more. Nor am I moved to say so out of an inordinate Zeal, which often prompts Men to condemn all others to Eternal Flames, who happen to differ from them in Opinion. 'Tis the Nature of the thing itself, and not I, that evinces the greatness of this dangerous Error; for it takes away the *Efficient Cause* of our Salvation, and will not allow that GOD does heal, and enlighten and operate in our Souls, and that he is the sole Director of all that great Work: It destroys the inward *Disposition* (or Inclination) of the Soul to *that Cause*, and to the effect thereof; namely, to Salvation; it takes away the Sense of our own Impotence and Corruption, and it quenches our thirst and desire after an Omnipotent and quickening Saviour; that is, it wholly subverts and destroys true Faith: It takes away the place itself, or the proper subject both of *Happiness*, and of the *Cause thereof*, and the necessary Disposition of the Soul towards it; that is, it takes away the internal ground, and all our *Passive* and inward *Faculties*; the Nature whereof is such that they cannot produce nor make to themselves Objects, but can only suffer themselves to be acted upon by their proper Objects, and receive and rejoice in all the Beatifick Sensations which these raise and excite in them. And in the room of these it substitutes the proud Idol of an active superficial Intellect, or of the Faculty of Human Reason, which being corrupt itself, and trusting either wholly to its own Strength, or taking to its Assistance the literal meaning of the Scriptures only, forms and delights itself with superficial, cold, dead, or even deformed and monstrous Ideas and Pictures of God and of Things Divine; and by these means it frames to itself a certain Political and Counterfeit Probity, which it believes will carry it safely to Heaven. Now there cannot be a more pernicious Error invented than this is. A Jew, Turk, or Heathen, if in sincerity of Heart, and from a deep Sense of their own Impotence they address themselves to their Creator, may without all peradventure be saved by that Omnipotent and Eternal Word of God which created and preserves them, and from whom every humble and sincere Motion in a Soul mistrusting itself, and having recourse to its Author, proceeds, who is the Word and Son of God himself, and who excites and cherishes those Motions as the Seeds of true Faith, in
such

such Souls as do not resist him through voluntary and obstinate Pride; and if they on the other hand correspond with such inward Motions and Suggestions, there is no Reason to doubt but that he will do more and more for them, and graciously procure them all the necessary helps and means, both Internal and External, whereby they may attain to a state of Salvation. The case is quite otherwise with a Mind infected with *Pelagianism*, and obstinately puffed up with an Opinion of its own sufficiency; a Mind that hides and dissembles its own Indigence, Misery and Impotence to any thing that's truly and really Good; a Mind that contemns its Physician and its own inward Faculties, and that renounces the alone Worker of its Salvation; a Mind that builds all upon the rotten Foundation of the active Power of its own Understanding, or the Faculty of its own Reason, upon which whatever Truth is built, whatever Notions of Virtue, Faith, Hope, Love, Charity and other Moral Duties, are raised, they are but Pictures and Ideas formed by its own corrupt Activity; they are barren and lifeless, yea, they are only the deformed and airy Images and Appearances of Things and solid Vertues; they are only the Pictures of Political and Philosophical Probity, which is puffed up with the Wind of Self-love, and which in this Life cannot hold out against the Temptations and Assaults of the Adversary, as is very well known to those, who notwithstanding all these poor helps, are yet often and upon very slight occasions, easily disturbed and dejected in their Minds; much less can they with such slight Armour stand firm and undaunted against the Winds and Floods of God's Judgment, which will beat down every House that is not built upon the Rock, or which for its Foundation has not *Christ* dwelling in us, in whose strength we may do all Things, upon whom we may rest and fix ourselves, and in whom, *If one does not abide as the Branch does in the Vine*, so that the Vine impart its Life and Spirit, and fructifying Virtue to him, as to the branch, he shall be rejected of the Father and cast forth, and wither, with all his ideal and vain Philosophical and Political Vertues, and shall be gathered and cast into the FIRE and burnt, John 15. 4, 5.

VII. *The true State of the Controversy between Mr. Le Clerc, and those Authors (and particularly my self) with whom they are angry. The Design of* *Jobb.* XVIII. Hitherto we have taken a view of the subject matter, and shewn the importance of what those Books and Authors treat of, against whom *Parrhasius* has therefore exclaimed in so confused a manner and at random, lest his Readers should come to know what the thing itself was about which those Authors &c. and Mr. *Le Clerc* and his Admirers differ: And that I might the better defeat such his design, I found it necessary to explain my self more at large upon those Heads, as I have done here, and that also because of all those that have written against Mr. *Le Clerc*, none has stated this matter so well and so fully as was necessary, and as they ought to have done. For, generally speaking, all their Disputes with him have been taken up about matters of lesser moment, and very often about things of no Consequence at all. For my part, 'tis my Desire and Intention that whatever either of us have or may find fault with in the other, be looked upon and esteemed as nothing in comparison of this one most important Point, which has an immediate and inseparable Relation to the Life, the Essence, the Foundation, and the Substance of Christianity, and the Eternal Salvation of every one; and to which indeed I and the Authors and Books which Mr. *Le Clerc* condemns on the one part, and he himself on the other, take quite different ways, and endeavour each so to recommend his own Judgment and Opinion, that, if such a thing could be, they would desire that Heaven and Earth might be filled with the same, and that all things might agree and center therein for ever.

As for my part, I confess I wish nothing more, nor do I desire to live and act either here or for ever, but only that all Honour, Praise and Glory be ascribed by all Creatures for ever, to God alone; the sole worker, the Author and the Fountain of all good, especially of that which is Eternal, Salutory, Solid, and truly Substantial: And that on the other side, *Rebellious, Ungrateful, Monstrous and absurd sinners; who, though of themselves they be nothing, and are even worse than nothing, would yet have it that that which is not, can be the cause of that which is; That there is more in the effect than in the cause, that nothing can produce some thing, that evil can be the cause of Good, crooked of Strait, impure of Pure, Sick of that which is sound, a thing condemned of that which is saved, &c.* I say, that on the contrary,

contrary, sinners may take to themselves shame and (to speak in Scripture Language) confusion of Face, for having ever admitted or cherished in their Hearts such an Unnatural and Monstrous Folly; and that such as are desirous of Eternal Life, might be forewarned and guarded against such pernicious Notions, I have out of that tender regard which I have for their Eternal Welfare, taken care in all that I have written and published, as far as I could and as opportunity served, fairly and sincerely to set before them that Salutary and most Necessary Doctrine, as the only Antidote against the above-mentioned capital Error, and as the main but and scope to which every thing else, and all the Actions of this Life ought to be directed; and hence it happened, that when I met with any Arguments against this Divine Truth in other Books, especially in those published by Anonymous Authors, I endeavoured according to my Ability to answer and refute them, and I even wished they might have been condemned to Eternal Darkness, to which they naturally lead Men, provided those who were seduced might be saved and delivered from them.

XVIII. But that was not so well taken by those who had determined stiffly to maintain and propagate the contrary Doctrine, and especially by the Authors of some Anonymous Books, which, as to this subject, I had confuted. Among these Mr. Le Clerc was the chief, who when he saw that I had refuted the Pelagian and Socinian Arguments of those Books, after a manner which he had never seen before, nor expected; and which left no room for any of the Pelagian Reasons or Exceptions, took it very much to Heart: and therefore to frustrate and oppose the Good which might Result from that Performance, in his *Bibliothèque Universelle*; he gave such an Account of my Divine Oeconomy, and imposed so many Falsities, and either Dissembled or Perverted my true meaning, and branded me with such opprobrious Names, as he thought would deter his Readers from looking into those Books, and from enquiring into the Truth of the matter itself, that so he might for the future, by the help of his prophane Learning and painted Eloquence, the more easily and without opposition Instill that most pernicious Doctrine into Mens Minds, and that in his Philosophical, Historical, Critical and Theological Writings, as well in Latin as in French; and

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XVIII. That
Mr. Le Clerc
began to write
against me in
particular, be-
cause my
Writings op-
pose and cross
his design.

and he has done it with all the Artifice and fraud that the most crafty among the Learned could have possibly thought of.

XIX. Why I answered him by a Letter.

XIX. I had some hopes that he might have been brought back into the right way, upon shewing him his own Errors, and setting the Truth in a clearer Light. And this I endeavoured to do in the foregoing Letter in such a manner, that had not his Mind been very much corrupted, he would rather have join'd Issue with the Truth, than resisted it in so absurd and Ridiculous a manner as his *Pambasus* has done.

XX. That none of the true Remonstrants ought to oppose the Doctrine of Mans Corruption, and Impotence, and of the Grace of God working inwardly, as I have expounded it.

XX. And indeed I cannot sufficiently wonder why any should be so Refractory, that although the Doctrine of Man's Corruption and Impotence, and of the gracious Operations of God in our Hearts, be proposed to them in such a manner, that none of their Five famous Articles, in the Sense which they call theirs, is shaken, nor any of those Inconveniences follow, which alone they profess to abhor, and against which they object, yet that they should be, and still obstinately continue adversaries of that Divine Grace, without which all things would tumble into the utmost disorder and confusion. Had I affirmed that Men are so corrupt and impotent through sin, that they could not by any means or Power whatever be restored; or that that Power, Strength, or Grace, was offered only to a few, and not likewise to the rest; or that it was of such a Nature, that when offered, it could not be rejected, or that when once admitted it could not be lost, and such like, I should not have wondred to have found Mr. *Le Clerc*; and all the Remonstrants, against me in these things; for it might be alledged, that upon these Principles, some would be drove to despair, and others flatter themselves into a dangerous Security; that Men would from thence seek and pretend Excuses for all their sins, wickednesses and impenitence; that they would destroy and invalidate the strongest Motives to Virtue and to the practice of good Works, with many other absurd Consequences, which they used to object against those from whom they therefore separated themselves. But when my Sense, as I have often declared at large, is, that corrupt and impotent Man cannot by his own Strength, but only by the Power and Grace of God working in him, be restored; that this Power, Strength, and Operating Grace of God,

XXII. There
can be nothing
more dangerous
to the nation
than the matter of
the religion of
the people and
the state of
the church.

XXI. And they had the less Reason to attempt any such Thing, because they could never bring any positive and solid Reasons, nor alledge any shocking Difficulties against it, but only the Arrogance and wild Inclinations of their Corrupt Nature, and of the Faculty of Proud Reason, deluded by its own Folly and the Suggestions of Satan, and consenting to them, where by their Minds are withdrawn from God, so that they neither seek his Honour and Glory, nor desire to be enlighten'd and govern'd by his Divine Operations in them; but on the other side adhere to themselves, to the grateful and pleasing Sense of their own Glory, Honour and Worth, and even to innumerable other

Foolish Studies and Occupations ; and seeing the gracious Operation and inward Solicitation of God in us is a great Enemy to these Things, behold, this is the true cause, why Corrupt Men, Lovers of themselves and what they call their own, are so very averse to the internal Grace of God ; and in this matter they are so blinded and hardened by the Enemy of Souls, that they have spared no Pains to disparage that adorable Grace of God, and to make a jest of it, and expose it to the World under the ridiculous Names of *Fanaticism* and *Enthusiasm*, together with all those who embrace and adore it, and put all their Hopes in it, as the only Thing that they can take hold of to save them in the General Shipwreck.

XXII. There can be nothing more dangerous nor more absurd in the matter of Salvation than to reject and deride the internal Grace of God.

* Jer. 2. 12.

XXII. Now I know no Crime, with respect to the matter of Salvation and true Religion, greater or more absurd than this of rejecting and ridiculing the inward and saving Grace and Operations of God in and upon our Hearts. Yea, even God himself upon the like occasion, calls upon the Heavens themselves to stand amazed at such a Thing, crying out by the Prophet : * *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, be ye terribly afraid and very desolate, saith the Lord ; for my People have committed two Evils ; they have forsaken me, the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewn out unto themselves Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no Water.* These two greatest Evils, the Desertion of God, and the setting up an abominable Idol in his Room, are now in their bloom, and flourish most mightily with all the modern Adversaries of the Internal saving Grace of God. When the Design of God is to communicate himself, his Spirit, and all his Wonders and Vertues every where and to all Men, it may be said that these not only resist, but that they even hate to have God Present in them, that they are afraid lest the Spirit of God should be efficacious in their Hearts, yea, that they are in great concern lest he should sometime or other act in them in that luminous and divine Manner which is peculiar to himself, or least the Promises of his Divine Operations and Gifts, and even of himself should in any sort respect, or be thought to belong to them ; so solicitous are they, to pervert and enervate all the Passages in the Holy Scriptures relating to this matter, and that in a most absurd manner, so that all the innumerable Promises of God concerning his giving and pouring out his Spirit upon all Flesh, and the Operations thereof in our Hearts, they

they turn off from themselves, and would have it that they either belong wholly to the Apostles and the Men of the Apostolic Age, or else they apply them to some Things that are merely External, and which suit with our way of Reasoning according to our best Rules of Logic and Criticism. Thus, for Instance, These Promises of God, * *I will put my Laws in their Minds, and I will write them in their Hearts,* must be reduced to this according to those wise Interpreters, and the import of them in their sense must be, "I will so order the External Means, that by their help you shall be enabled to imprint and retain in your Memory the (Pelagian and Socinian) Ideas, which your Reason shall by the help of Criticism and Philosophy extract from the Letter of the Scripture." Behold here, the surprizing Folly and Madness of Mankind, who are not ashamed thus to set up those Idols of Reason, Criticism and Philosophy, in the room of God himself, and instead of our real and internal Faculties, and the living and powerful Impressions of God upon them!

* Jer. 31. 33.
Heb. 8. 8.
and 10. 16.

XXIII. And in this indeed our *Parrhasius*, does very much, and almost every where Pride himself; yea in his *Parrhasiana*, his dorage gains upon him to that Degree, that he expressly says, * that the Promises of God that he will sometime increase his Lights among Christians, which shall bring to pass a great Change among them, must be fulfilled by the means and INTERVENTION OF REASON AND CRITICISM. So that all those Magnificent Promises of God concerning his Spirit, and the Knowledge of himself and of *Christ*, wherein is Life Eternal, and about the Lights of his Wisdom, and about all the other Graces and Immense Treasures of the Riches which lie hid in *Christ*, which shall be poured forth in a very bountiful Manner upon all Men in the last times by God himself, will amount to as much as if God had only told Men, *I will make you good Criticks and Rationalists, and such as by the help of Reason and Criticism ye shall be able to know and obtain every Thing for your selves.* Who would not be ashamed to exalt that infamous Prostitute, the Faculty of Human Reason, which even in our first Parents were drawn by Satan into the Fall, thro' their Reasonings upon, and Critical Interpretations of the Words of God. *God made Man upright, but they sought out many Reasonings.* Eccl. 7. 29. ver. vulg. And ever since in all their Posterity,

XXIII.
Parrhasius's
Ravings as to
these Things.
* *Parrh. Tom.*
i. p. 415.

Posterity, has been almost wholly deslower'd and corrupted by the Instigation of Satan, and by an unaccountable Inclination of wrangling about Words, to such a height even to this present time; as to set up a most impure Harlot, without acknowledging the Contagious Nature of her Distemper; without renouncing and repenting of the same, without passing thro' a state of Purification and Death, and without being quicken'd a-new and restored to a state of Health and Purity; to set it up I say as the very substance of God's most precious Promises, instead of the Chast Wisdom of God, and in the place of the Holy Spirit of the Lord, and thereby to prostitute the Throne and dwelling Place of the most high to a Strumpet of Satan, and set her over all Christians to illuminate, and govern, and conduct them to Heaven? Could ever the Enemy of Souls have hatched and brought forth a more monstrous Birth than this Hellish Invention? Hence also it comes that some would have it that a Man is really Converted to God by his Ratiocinations, and by turning and directing the Course of the Animal Spirits in the Brain from certain traces and ways into others; and by repeating the same acts so long until the said new ways be well beaten, and at last end in good confirmed Habits, and such like monstrous Fancies; to which we may justly add the Critical Interpretation (shall I say or depravation) of that celebrated Place, wherein Christ most expressly teaches us that the true Knowledge of himself and of his Mysteries must come from, and be ascribed to the Virtue and Power of the Father alone, who hides the same from the Wise and Prudent, and reveals them unto the Simple, who like little Children, know not how to use any Art or Ratiocination, but instead thereof, offer up their Hearts, their Understandings and all the Powers and Faculties of their Souls wholly to Christ to display his Power in them, and to illuminate, and govern, and direct them in all Things as he shall think fit. Wherefore he also joyfully gives Thanks to the Father, as the alone Author of that great Good, which he had hid from the great Doctors and Proud Rationalists of the World, who gloried in their own, and not in the Wisdom and Operations of God. Now this most admirable Passage we should be obliged according to Mr. Le Clerc's

* *Entretiens sur Div. Matieres de Theol.* pag. 27, 28, &c.

† Matth. 11. 25.

|| See the Notes upon Matth. 11. 25, &c. in the French New Testament, Translated by Mr. Le Clerc. way,

way, to interpret in this manner. That the Thing or Matter which our Saviour treats of there, is the proposition and persuasion of this Historical Fact, *That Christ was sent by the Father, and that his Doctrine is true.* That those little Ones, to whom the Father revealed this, were such as were better versed in the Art of Reasoning than the Jewish Doctors and Scribes, altho' these looked upon them as Children and illiterate, when yet they were better Logicians and Naturalists than the said Doctors themselves. That the Revelation on the part of God the Father, were those External Miracles which he wrought by the Power of the Father; and that with regard to those little Ones, it was the Conclusions which they made according to the Rules of right Reasoning, and as became good Logicians. That the Wise and Prudent, from whom God hid those Things, were the Scribes and Pharisees, and the Jewish Doctors, who were indeed well enough versed in their own Traditions, but were very bad Reasoners, and Explained the Scriptures against all the Rules of right Reason and sound Criticism: For as to Criticism and Logic they were mere Blunderers. That the bidding, whereby the Father hid those Things from them, consists in this, that God permitted that they should not examine that by Reason and Criticism, which seemed to be contrary to their Ideas and Traditions: So that God left them to their own dark Understandings, or to the perverse use of Criticism and Logic, and all the consequences thereof. So that Christ's meaning, and the genuine sense of the Words must be this, "I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast suffer'd this Historical Proposition, this rational Conclusion, that I am sent by thee, not to be made by those who neither Reason or Explain the Scriptures according to the Rules of right Reason and sound Criticism: But that thou wouldst have me work such great Miracles, that those who Reason better according to the Rules of right Reasoning, than those Jewish Doctors do, might pick out and draw from thence this Conclusion and Persuasion, by the help of Reason and the natural Laws of Logic, that I am sent by thee." Who I say, can Refrain, I will not say from Laughter, but from Tears, to hear such ridiculous stuff.

XXIV. *That Parrhasius is in the wrong to suppose that Reason is the only Faculty we have to understand and know Things by. That we have other more real Faculties, and better Lights than that of Reason.*

* Oecon. Div. Vol. 5. of the Co-Operation ch. 1.

† Parrh. pag. 417, 434, &c.

|| Cogit. Rat. in Dissert. Prelim. §. 43, 45. Oecon. Div. Vol. 2. ch. 20. De Method. part 2. §. 1, 3. pag. 51. And De Erudit. lib. 1. §. 6, 10. and lib. 2. §. 5, 7.

XXV. *Which is Illustrated by Similitudes.*

XXIV. True it is, this is not a proper Place to Examine and Confute all those Absurdities, with his other misinterpretations of Scripture; (which I have already * done in some measure elsewhere) we cannot however but observe how much *Parrhasius* is mistaken, and how he abuses Reason, when in order to vindicate and defend the same he every where cries out "† that no Body can speak against Reason, but who would seduce Men, and persuade them to believe any Thing that he pleases; that without the Lights of Reason, we can understand nothing that is Revealed; that Reason cannot be forsaken but that we must fall into Fanaticism;" And the like: For in these Things (not to mention that 'tis wrong to suppose right Reason, when yet 'tis Sick and most Corrupt) *Parrhasius* ought to consider that he confounds, as has been often made appear, Things that are quite different; namely, the true Intelligence or Understanding and the Lights thereof, with the Faculty of Reason, and with the acts, and painted, and delusive Light thereof. The Understanding, or the Capacity of knowing God and Things Divine, is a most essential part of Man, 'tis the Eye of the Soul wherewith it sees all the Objects of the Intellectual World; but 'tis Passive, like the Eye; and it receives Light from God and from its proper Objects, as the Eye does in the outward World. But Reason, or the Capacity of forming Ideas of Things, as Painters draw Pictures, according to their own Fancy, and of Reasoning about them, is not essential to Man (as we have || demonstrated elsewhere) and is a certain accessory gift of exercising itself after a superficial and sporting manner, so that should a Man want that activity, he might not therefore want true Light, neither inward nor outward; for God can discover both himself, and the Intellectual World, yea, and even the Ideas of the External World, to a Passive Understanding and Capacity, without any act on the part of our Reason.

XXV. Suppose we then, a Man for some time to suspend the Activity and Ideas of his own Reason, cannot God therefore and Spiritual Objects irradiate his Spiritual Faculties, and shine in them? Suppose we, another that has not yet used his Reason (such as Children, and even some advanced in Years) must therefore the External Light of Nature cease to operate, and insinuate it self into his External Faculties,

or into his Eyes, because forsooth he does not use his Reason? Suppose we again, that any one wants the real and outward Faculty of seeing, that is, that he is Blind, and that notwithstanding of his being Blind, he is endued with a most active, subtle, and sagacious Faculty of Reasoning, and such as can order and dispose every Thing that it conceives or Reasons about, very regularly and methodically; here I ask, whether such a Blind Man can with all his Sagacity and Ratiocination, by the strength of his own Reason, excite, I will not say, the glorious Light of the Sun, and the Colours, and the lively Characters of the Things of this World; but even whether he can form so much as any Ideas or Images of such Things in his Conception, or in Reason itself? Who will not own that such a Person can form nothing but Chimera's and Lyes by his Reason, and by the imaginary Light of his Reason, so long as his External Faculty of seeing, or his Eyes are not cured, and then passively exposed to the Sun and the luminous Objects of this World, that so they may act upon them, and communicate to them Light and the lively forms of Things, before and without any act of Reason, altho' afterwards she may divert her self about them, and about the Formation of Mental Idea's and Ratiocinations? The Case is the same where Men are Blind in a Spiritual Sense, that is, when their Intelligent Part, or the Faculty of their Passive Understanding, is shut up, when yet at the same time they may have the Exercise of their active Understanding, and of the Faculty of Reason in a very signal Manner. Should such a Blind Man (and such we are all from our Corrupt Original) not have the Eye of his Soul opened, should that Passive Understanding, which is given for Divine and Spiritual Objects, but is now dead, or in a deep Lethargy, not be rouzed up by the Omnipotent Physician of Souls; should not the Divine Sun and all the Objects of the Divine and Spiritual World present themselves to it, and dart forth and infuse therein Light, and true, and luminous Conceptions of themselves; then with whatever Sagacity, Industry and Capacity the Reason of such a Blind Man should bestir itself, it not only could not produce in itself true Light, and lively and luminous Notions of Things Spiritual and Divine; but not so much as any Ideas and Representations of the same, how empty, superficial and barren soever; yea, it would be able to form nothing

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but

but Chimera's, Trifles, and absurd and monstrous Fancies, such as are every where to be met with in the so celebrated Works of *Parrhasius*. Who then can say, in Spirituals as well as in Corporeals, that those who speak against the imaginary Light and Ideas in the Reason of a Blind Man, with a Design to carry him to the Physician and to Realities, *Mean to seduce him, or to persuade him to any thing that they please: That without the Ideas of that blind Reason, he can understand nothing of what shall be discovered to him; That he must fall into Fanaticism, or into a Ditch, if he desert that Faculty, which is so active and ready at forming Images and Ideas?* But all these things *Parrhasius* and his Hero might be told over and over again, and even until they cracked their Brains e'er they would leave off to confound (which they always and every where do) the passive Faculties, and the Lights and real Notions which we receive by them, both from Spiritual and Corporeal Objects, with the Active Faculty of Reason, with its barren and borrowed Light, and with the Airy Ideas thereof; or before they would be convinced, that these without them are nothing, and can do nothing, but what is Chimerical and Trifling; and that they without these are real and solid, and that they both are immense in themselves, and can do great Things.

XXVI. *Parrhasius does not like Mr. Le Clerc, assign the true Reason of his Cause, which is founded in Experience.*

(a) Bibl.
Univ. Tom.
XV. Pag. 369.

XXVI. I wonder indeed that *Parrhasius*, among all the Arguments and Reasons whereby he endeavours to Defend Mr. Le Clerc's cause and his own, has omitted to mention a better and more substantial Reason, why he sticks to those Opinions, obstinately defends them, and does all he can to propagate them, and is in hopes that they will find a good reception with many. Mr. Le Clerc himself did long ago more plainly declare that Reason, in favour of his own Sentiments, in his *Bibliothèque Universelle*, in these Words, in which he commends the matter itself so much, that he seems secretly to laugh at those who should not take notice of it. (a) *Some affirm*. Says he, that all Men, should we wholly forbear confuting the Socinian Opinions, would insensibly without Sense become Unitarians or Socinians, and that in such manner that they could not tell how they came to be so; because the Opinions of those Men (the Socinians) are better accommodated to the capacity of the Vulgar, than those of the Orthodox, and are such as naturally present themselves to their Minds. For to a Human Mind, in as much

much as it is corrupted from its Birth, as it is separated from God, and left to itself, as it neither regards, nor is governed by any thing but its own Propensions, its own Wisdom, its own Illumination; and finally by the Solicitations of Satan; to such a Mind, I say, the *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Notions, do indeed very naturally present themselves, they being so mightily accommodated to the Animal Capacity of carnal and proud Men, that unless the Good Spirit of God interpose and infuse a more Divine Principle, to knock and penetrate and dwell in our Hearts, *All Men indeed would become insensibly without Sense Socinians and Pelagians, so that they would not know how they came to be so; because such Opinions are best accommodated to the Capacity, and to the Propension and State of Corrupt Nature both in the Vulgar, and in all Men born in sin and corruption.* And indeed *Socinianism* and *Pelagianism*, with all their Wisdom, is nothing else in effect but that very state of corrupt Nature, as it is now rendred so, by extinguishing the Divine Grace, and by yielding to its sinful Bents, and the Power of the Devil over it. All of us, as we are become corrupt and void of the Divine Operation of the Holy Spirit, are by Nature made and born *Pelagians* and *Socinians* as to our Principles; and if to this be added the continual Solicitations of the Devil inwardly, and the artful Representation of those Errors outwardly, we cannot but feel in ourselves that our depraved Reason, and haughty Inclinations are strongly inclined to favour and embrace those Errors. And this is the true Reason why the Nature of Man, which loves and stilly adheres to itself, so Spontaneously inclines to those ways of Error; from which, after having by long use and custom made them its own, it can no more be separated and disintangled, than the Devil himself can be torn from his Darkness and Lyes: and hence also, they that sow such Tares, conceive no small hopes that many will receive and cherish and propagate them as much as ever they can.

XXVII. But he that will attend to the secret Impulses and Operations of the Good Spirit of God, *XXVII. This seeking to save and restore corrupt Nature, and which Cause will he darts into our Hearts even from our Birth, and have no Power over them who listen to the Solicitations of God more than to those of Satan and corrupt Nature, and give themselves up to them.*

which would dwell there, and work out our Recovery and Salvation; and he that will from thence and from the good Exhortations and helps which God affords him outwardly in the Holy Scriptures, and by the Counsels of Good Men, learn truly to know himself, and begin to see that of himself he is nothing, and can do nothing; that he is corrupt throughout, and altogether Miserable, that he is wholly plunged into Darkness; that he is blind, perverse and rebellious, and that in his Nature he cherishes the Seeds of all Error, Wickedness and Rebellion; such an one, I say, that shall see and do these things, will abhor those Principles, which they so much boast of, as Hell itself and as the Fountain of all Evil; and turning to the Lord, the sole Author and Fountain of Light and Goodness, his chiefest Good, his Benefactor, his Physician, his Governor, his Defender, his Saviour, he will continually cry out with the most eminent Saints, (a) *Let me hear thy loving kindness, O Lord, betimes in the Morning, for in thee is my trust. Shew thou me the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my Soul unto thee. Deliver me, O Lord, from mine Enemies; for I flee unto thee to hide me. Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee for thou art my God. Let thy good Spirit lead me forth into the Land of Righteousness; and quicken me for thy Names sake, O Lord. For surely, (b) They that forsake thee shall perish: Thou destroyest all them that commit Fornication against thee. But 'tis good for me to hold me fast by God, and to put my trust in the Lord.*

(a) Psalm
143.

(b) Psalm
73.

These things I thought best to premise in general, because they are of the greatest Importance to all Men; and contain the true State and Marrow of the Controversy between Mr. *Le Clerc* and me; and for that they will also give great Light almost into all things, and especially to what I design to offer more particularly upon the *Parrhasian* Censure; to which I now proceed.

More

More Particular

REMARKS

BOTH

Theological and Critical

Upon the

Parrhasian Censure.



As to the Personal Reflexions contain'd in the Censure, I shall take but little notice of them, that I may have the more time to prosecute (and that not slightly, as there shall be occasion) such Things as may be useful to the Readers.

And because it may be of use to detect the Sources and Principles of the *Parrhasian Censure*, I shall first of all do it in a few Words.

Pelagianism, which alone is what *Parrhasius* admires, is the Theology of SELF-LOVE.

The PRINCIPLES
of the Parrhasian Censure,

Self-love is the love of ones own worth. Self-love the love would persuade ones self and others, That he is True, Just and Good, and endued with every Virtue. And this is properly Pride, *Self-love the great Principle of Pelagianism.*

This Pride denies and hates the first Truth, and contains also in it the first Lye. The FIRST of Self-love, TRUTH is this, that the Original Being (*viz. God*) first Lying, is; and that he is the Author and Cause of all Being and Reality; of all Being, and well-being. The FIRST LYE is, that what of itself is a Non-

Entity

Entity, has yet a Being, and is the cause of Reality; that a *Non-Entity* is the cause of *Entity*; and that which of itself is *not Good*, is the real cause of *Good*. Hence proud Self-love is originally false and a liar; It is also a *Hater* and *Slanderver* of the *Truth*.

*The second,
Injustice.*

It is also *unjust* from the beginning, in not giving to every one his own; to God, all *Good*, to itself nothing.

*The third,
Blindness.*

From the want and hatred of the *Truth* comes also *Darkness*. Hence Self-love is by Nature *Blind*. Nor does it see, that while it desires to be counted *True*, *Just* and *Good*, it is deceitful, wicked and *Evil*. It is ignorant of its own Nature. But if in the room of that *Light* and *Truth* which it wants, it substitutes the *Efforts*, *Operations* and *Productions* of its own *Active Understanding*, or of *Reason* (which is also blind) it only multiplies to itself *Darkness*, *Evils* and *Lyes*.

*The fourth,
Malice and
Cunning.*

And hence it comes, that if it be proved and made appear from the *Truth*, that it is in a *Lye*, in *Injustice*, in *Evil*; and that for all that 'twill neither die to itself, nor by its *Death* give *Glory* to God alone; hence, I say, it comes, that it grows *Malicious*, and endeavours by all the *Artifice* and *Shifts* it can possibly invent, both to defend what is its own, and to oppose every thing that is *True*, *Just* and *Good*.

*The three
Principal kinds
of Artificial
Malignity.
Thraſonism.*

From this *Artificial Malignity* arise chiefly two or three sorts of *Frauds*, especially when the *Truths* proposed, and which it opposes, are such as it finds it self unable to refute. The first sort of *Fraud* is an *insolent buffing*, when it makes as if the *Things* which are advanced in opposition to it, were so weak and insignificant, that such a strong *Champion* as it is, ought not to vouchsafe an *Answer* to them, but to reject them with *Scorn* and *Reproach*. The second sort of *Fraud* is *Flattery*, when it pretends that these things do not at all, or but very little make against it; and this happens when such things are advanced by *Persons* it stands in awe of, and whom therefore, as being the stronger *Adversaries*, it would fain soften and keep in good *Humour*. The third sort is, a more open and particular *Revenge*, by shewing how far it can carry its *Fury* and *Hatred*; by this, it so violently Attacks some of its *Adversaries* with all the *Artifices* of *Lying*, *Injustice* and *Malice*, that it thinks

Flattery.

*Impotent Re-
venge.*

thinks it shall thereby deter others from meddling with it for ever after.

He that would look for Instances of all these Things in *Parrhasius*, and in his *Parrhasiana*, will quickly find whether there be plenty of them there, or not. Come we now more particularly to the Censure, and that according to the Numbers which we annexed to the several Parts of it.

1. Self-love (out of its Pride and Blindness) seems (1.) *Parrhasius* always just to itself, whatsoever therefore it does, that is just. Therefore, to complain of it is unjust. Therefore those that have complained of the *Bibliothèque Universelle* (of Mr. *Le Clerc*) have done it unjustly, although they have shewn (as I have done in the foregoing Letter) that he has perverted almost every thing that he relates in it.

2. Self-love, from Artificial Malice, sometimes uses an Argument drawn from Envy and leading to Hatred, as Mr. *Le Clerc* himself has observed and disproved at large (a) elsewhere. But here *Parrhasius* little regards that, though upon this occasion it be nothing to the purpose. For what has *Antonia Bourignon* to do here? and why does *Parrhasius* falsely, and contrary to what has been publicly declared and is so well known, make her the head of a Sect, by calling me her follower? The Dispute here was not about that matter. But *Parrhasius* is displeased with *Antonia Bourignon's* Doctrine, and therefore, to make her odious, he would fain represent her as a Sectarian, because her Divinity is contrary to his *Pelagianism*. For, seeing she, even from her Infancy, observed that the Christians of these days sought and loved things Earthly, and not Eternal; and that they were led by the Spirit of Nature and corrupt Reason, and not by the Spirit and Mind of Christ; and seeing she prayed to God daily, that he would preserve her from that worldly Spirit, and bestow upon her the Mind and Spirit of Christ, and finally obtained the same; she left it confirmed by her Life, her Words and Writings, that the substance of Christianity, and the meaning and stress of the Holy Scriptures consist in this, that Men, laying aside the Love of Earthly Things, and of themselves and their own Wisdom and corrupt Reason, may become fit Vessels to receive the Holy Spirit of Christ, that so they may be quicken'd, instructed, Govern'd and fill'd therewith, as

(2.) Of the Argument from Envy.

(a) In fine Logic. Differ. de Argumento ab Invidia ducto.

found Members are with the Spirit of their Head; and that then, and not otherwise, they will become true Christians. Now seeing these things are Diametrically opposite to the *Pelagian* System, 'tis not to be wondred at that *Parrhasius* brands those with the Invidious Name of *Sectarians*, who published, and who, agreeably to the Scriptures and to their own Consciences, and to the Testimony of God himself, believed these Things. But 'tis strange he did not see (through the blindness of Self-love) how that by this invidious Appellation of a *Sectarian*, he puts it in the power of every Body to cast the same Reflection upon Mr. *Le Clerc*, who left that Sect in which he was born, and went over to another, with a design, as every one says, under the umbrage of that Sect, to hide, cherish, and propagate the Opinions of another Sect, which has no great relation to Christianity.

(3.) *Of his one little Jest.*

3. I observed and complain'd in the foregoing Letter, how Mr. *Le Clerc* had loaded me with many Falsities, that he turned the best and most Salutary Things into Poison and Ridicule, and that he had expos'd Men of the greatest Merit to publick Scorn and Contempt: And this, *Parrhasius* here, from the Principles of Self-love, as every body can't but observe, calls *but one little Jest*.

(4.) *Full of Gall and Malice.*

4. On the other hand, and from the same Principles, whatever in Justice and Truth, and in the sincerity of my Heart I answered, That *Parrhasius* says, *is full of Gall and Malice*. Nor indeed can self-esteem impose Names otherwise on things which are contrary to it; than they do that are in a Bilious Fever (arising from the excessive Irregularities of self-Love) who fancy they see all Things Inverted, and Tinctured, as I may say, with Gall; so that even the Physician himself, may by such a sick Person, be taken for a most malicious Enemy.

(5.) *Of Mr. Le Clerc's Equity.*

5. 'Tis but natural Justice to Satisfy and Answer apother that in earnest complains of an Injury done him. But *Parrhasius* says here, That Mr. *Le Clerc* does not in the least regard that, and *that he thought fit to make no Answer* according to the Equity of Self-love, which thus wittily endeavours to hide its own Weakness. He repeats it below, that he will not enter into the Controversy, nor by that means give occasion to another to make himself known. But, all that's contained in this Censure, either is no Controversy, Con-

Contradiction, or an occasion given to Reply; but must pass for nothing, for Sugar Plumbs, and for one little Jest; or Parrhasius, if he be the same with Mr. Le Clerc, has not kept his Word. Whether then the one should be ascribed to his Blindness, and the other to his swerving from the Truth, let himself and others Judge.

6. To call my Thoughts, which I have published in my Books, *Dreams*, as this Author does, and to say that they are *known* to be *such*, when yet he does not prove it, and the contrary is evident; every one cannot but see from what quality of Self-love. Parrhasius says so; nor have I a Mind upon every occasion to repeat their invidious Names.

(6.) *Dreams*
obj. Red.

7. Here Parrhasius complains that my Design is to *Defame* Mr. Le Clerc: But indeed nothing is represented to him but what he published himself to be read by every one, as is evident from the Places and Pages there quoted. Nor is it counted (unless Self-love, according to its own Principles, should please to invert the Names of Things) any Disgrace, to Err in matters of Opinion; nor can that be called *Defamation*, to confute an Error, published by another, or to represent the same to him; much less when it is done with a good Design, as I did, to put others upon their Guard against such dangerous Errors; and to reclaim the mistaken Person himself, if there be any hope of his Recovery. Are things then come to this pass, that none shall dare to take any Notice of the Socinian and Pelagian Notions, which are so industriously spread, but he must be called and looked upon as a *Defamer*, and that indeed by one, who himself exposes and defames the Ancients as well as the Moderns by all the ways of Contempt and Reproach he can possibly invent? This surely shews the great Blindness and Wickedness of Self-love!

(7.) *Of de-*
faming his
Friend.

8. Here Parrhasius owns that Mr. Le Clerc is to blame; but in what? namely, for that he acted the part of a Scoffer but slightly (*by one very inconsiderable Jest*) and omitted to do as he ought to have done, viz. to pass a most severe Censure upon what was so disagreeable to his Taste: That is, Parrhasius thinks that Mr. Le Clerc deserves to be blamed, for that he did not enough display the abovesaid Principles of Self-love against what contradicts that Love; that 'tis his Business not only to *Ridicule*, but even to make the most cruel havock of every thing that comes

(8.) *Of the*
Obligation he
had to pass a
more severe
Censure.

out

out against the same ; (as he has often done and still continues to do upon the most venerable part of Antiquity.) But what it will avail him to usurp and to execute this Office, he does not seem to perceive. He will shew himself to be morose, and a hater of solid Truth and real Good. Then, if it so happen that by his Artifices he seduces some, 'tis true he will lead them very much astray from the Truth, and from what is good ; but yet after all, they will have Reason to be very much displeased with him upon that Account. He will thereby oblige those that are attacked to expose his Errors, and to confirm the Truth the more ; or if they keep silent, it will entitle them to the reward promised to those that suffer Injuries, and upon himself he will draw down the Punishments which God has denounced against the obstinate and the resisters of his Grace ; and he will make his Return and Conversion to God, and to his Light and Grace, so much the more difficult ; which that God may graciously prevent, I sincerely pray.

9. What Parrhasius means by Religion, and what by Fanaticism, of which he says, That I make the former Ridiculous, and turn it into the other.

9. In the Preface to the English Edition of the *Divine Oeconomy*, I have shewn more fully what Parrhasius really means by these Words, *To expose Religion to Mockery, and to turn it into Fanaticism*. The matter in short comes to this. RELIGION with Parrhasius is, Ideas excited in depraved Reason from the Words of Scripture, by the help of Grammar, Criticks and Philosophy, excluding and deriding the Inward Operation of the Spirit of God in our Hearts, and exploding those sacred Mysteries which are repugnant to the taste of corrupt and proud Reason, and to the Blindness, Falsity, and Fantastick Lights of Self-love. And FANATICISM with him is, The Asserting the Grace of God working inwardly in us, in the Heart, in the Understanding, in the Faculties of the Mind, and producing in them Faith, Hope, Charity, and solid Vertues, and thereby restoring them to their spiritual Health and Vigour. We have also said more of Fanaticism in other Places : But because my *Divine Oeconomy* subverts and explodes this Philosophical (or Socinian) Religion, and asserts the Grace of God, as the first Element and Principle of the Christian Religion, this is what Parrhasius (from the Blindness and Malignity of Self-Love) says is, *To expose Religion to Mockery, and to convert it into mere Fanaticism*.

So much for the first onset of the *Parrhasian* Who Parrhasius Personates here.
 Censure. In what Follows we shall see him draw out the main Body of his Army, (alcho' he says he will not fight) and play all his heavy Artillery upon us. But why do I liken him to a Soldier, when in truth I know not whom he personates. He does not shew himself to be a Divine and a Christian; for then he would have born with, and even been thankful for such Corrections, as were suited to reclaim Mr. Le Clerc from his Errors. He does not behave himself as becomes a Philosopher; for then he would Reason, and to his Words add the Weight of Arguments. Nor does he act like a Critick. For he instances in nothing in particular, whereupon he can ground any Critical Remarks. What then? Let him read these words of his own; and unless that blind Principle of Self-love cast a Cloud before his Eyes, he will there see and detect himself. (a) *The Orators* (or Declaimers) often used to stir up the People against those whom they did not like: Nor yet did they shew any good Reason why they deserved to be hated. It was enough for those (Declaimers) to accuse them of a thousand Falsities, which they were not at all solicitous to prove; which because they pronounced them with Vehemence and Passion, as if they themselves had been fully persuaded of the Truth of what they alledged, They by that means allured the People to be of their side, without offering one solid Reason for the same; which way of acting ought not to be proposed for Imitation, unless one openly declares himself an Enemy of all Good Nature and Equity.

10. The Arguments of the *Mysticks* Parrhasius calls Fooleries from a Principle of Blindness. Now to make this appear, I shall for the Readers better satisfaction, briefly shew, what in reality the Mystical and Allegorical Theology is, and also explain some other Things relating to the same, which Parrhasius so much despises and ridicules.

The whole Substance of the Mystical Writings, or of MYSTIC THEOLOGY, amounts to this, What Mystical Theology is, and is included in it: Namely, That we love God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind, and with all our Strength; and that we endeavour also to bring our Neighbours to the same. But seeing that since the Fall of Adam those inward Faculties together with the outward, are vitiated and filled with evil Inclinations, evil Objects, and with Errors and Pollutions of all sorts, which have thrust out the Love

Rom. 5. 5.
John 14. 21.
23.

*The Nature of
true Allegori-
cal Theology,
and the Origin
and first Be-
ginning there-
of in Man.*

Love of God, and are inconsistent therewith; 'tis therefore necessary before the Divine Love can return and govern in us, that the abovesaid Faculties be cleansed and purified from all those Impediments; and this indeed at first is done in a more imperfect manner, through the Grace of God afforded us by *Christ*, and the Co-operation of the Faculties themselves; so that the *Understanding* is exercised in the Active Contemplation of God, the *Will* in fervent Prayer, and all the other *Faculties* in Mortification; and afterwards more perfectly and more fully, when the Faculties being become passive, the Operation of God is the sole acting Cause in them, and purifies them thoroughly from all their Pollutions and Infirmities. Hence as soon as the place is fully cleansed and fit to receive the Divine Love, God pours it forth into such a Soul, by the Holy Spirit which is given to it; and *Christ* with the Father comes into it, and so all the most Sacred Trinity dwells there, manifesting itself therein, and governing and bestowing upon that Soul the various Kinds and Degrees of perfect and continual Prayer and Contemplation, and also such foretastes of Life Eternal, such Lights, Joys and other effects of Reciprocal Love and Eternal Delight, as he thinks fit, until it come hereafter to enjoy all Things for ever and in the most perfect manner. And this is briefly the Sum and Subtance of all Myltical Theology.

Farther, seeing the whole Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength of such Persons abound with the Love of God, that is, seeing they are full of God himself, and of Divine, Spiritual and Internal Things, thence it comes, that whatever they think of, whatever they desire, whatever they do, whatever they see in the whole World, whatever they hear, taste, touch or feel, God is always present, they ever think of God, they always meet with, and are ever imployed about Things Divine; they always see, feel and taste Heavenly Things, God and the Things of God, in all Things. And this is the first and true cause and rise of all solid ALLEGORICAL THEOLOGY, which can never enter into any Minds but such as are in a very high degree Myltical. These then when they read or hear of any External History, or of any Ceremony, or the like, in the Holy Scriptures, they presently discover therein, though more generally, God, *Christ* and the Holy Spirit, where-

wherewith they are filled, the mighty Wonders of God and the Internal Nature of Souls, which is the Element wherein they wholly Live. If they look upon the Sun, the Clouds and other Meteors; If they view the Earth, the Metals, the Plants, the Flowers, with all their Smells and Beauties; If the Fruits, if Animals; yea, if they see Men themselves and all their Societies and Employments, immediately they think of, they discover, they feel, and they contemplate God, and Things Cœlestial and Spiritual, yea they bring these Things along with them, and implant them into those others.

Now when they are well exercised in these, and are also either prepared or called to more Inward and Secret Things, then, when God thinks fit, they further receive from the Holy Spirit the special Gift of Wisdom and Understanding, whence it comes, that seeing the Father created all Things, without excepting any, by his Word or Son in the Holy Spirit; and seeing the same Father has begun to restore those that are fallen, by his Eternal Word *Jesus Christ* in the Holy Spirit; and seeing he has also spoken to us by his Son in the same Spirit, by illuminating, moving and governing the Patriarchs, Prophets, Evangelists and Apostles, by whom he revealed the Scriptures, and every thing in them relating to the Actions, Government, Revelations, Divine Institutions and Tenders of Holy Men devoted to God; hence, I say, it comes, that by a special Gift of the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, given to those Friends of God, their Internal Eyes are so opened and illuminated by the Divine Wisdom, that both in the whole Creation of God, and in every Creature, in their Faculties and Vertues, in their Beginning, Progress and Tendency, as I may say, to Perfection, and in the whole Oeconomy relating to them; in all the Scriptures of God also, and in the Histories, Doctrines and Institutions contained in them, they see most evidently and clearly in so far as God pleases, the peculiar Characters, the bright Images, the most distinct and admirable Footsteps, and as I may say, the most profound and indelible Signatures of the Eternal Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and of all their Designs and Procedure in Creating, Redeeming and Restoring, and finally in Glorifying his Creatures; all which open and explain the Nature and Glory of all created Things and of every thing contained in the Scriptures, their Basis, Structure,

*The Origin,
Nature and
Principles of
Theology and
Theosophic
Philosophy.*

Structure, and Perfection; their Roots, Body, Branches, Fruits and Uses, and whatever else relates to them, while the same things remain as *Enigma's* to others, who yet may be very pious Souls. And from this Gift 'tis that those who are inflamed with Divine Love, and illuminated with the Wisdom thereof, do so magnificently describe the most Divine Things under the cover of Externals and by Emblems, all which seem very obscure, and even absurd to the Ignorant, to the Blind and Impious, (a) *Who have not God in all their Thoughts*, and to the Envious and Scoffers, (b) *Into whose Soul Wisdom shall not enter*; even as under the Emblem of Conjugal Society Solomon, being full of the Spirit of God, in the Song of Songs, of old Described the work of our Redemption; and as not long since the most sublime Mystick *Johannes a Cruce* has also done.

Now from these few Instances we may see what those Things are which *Parrhasius* so despises and ridicules, and whether it may not be said to him instead of any other Answer, as the Apostle of old told one, who 'tis true, did not Ridicule, but yet would have profaned the Spirit of God, and his Grace. (c) *Thou hast neither Part nor lot in this matter, for thy Heart is not Right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine Heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity.*

But that he also despises the Persons of the Mysticks, and the Reasons of their procedure, the Reason thereof is this. For seeing that they who are thoroughly touched and penetrated with the Light and Love of God, and have tasted, to use a (d) Scripture Expression, *how sweet the Lord is*, can relish nothing but God; hence it comes that all things else become Insipid and Nauseous to them; insomuch that they no more long after and desire such Things; but rather forsake and forget them; and in this manner they act as well with regard to all worldly Affairs, as to all secular Sciences, Histories, Elegancies, Curiosities, and the like, soasmuch as all these Things are as disagreeable to them as Hay or Dung is to a human Palate. They cannot apply their Minds to such Things, after that they have once tasted the sweetness of the Lord, they cannot spend their time about such barren and insipid Trifles, which in the

(a) Psalm 10.

(b) Wisd. 1.

4.

(c) Act. 8.
21, &c.

Why Parrhasius despises the Persons of the Mysticks, and their ways of acting.

(d) Psalm 34.

9.

1 Pet. 2. 3.

sight of God, and in comparison of solid Truth, are mere Bubbles, even vainer and emptier than Vanity itself. Now for this Reason it happens, that they either take no care to be, or are not, for the most part, very Wise and Learned according to the way of the World, or if they were so, they leave off being so, and even very willingly forget all such empty Trifles. Which when other Learned Men (as they think themselves) observe, when they find that those Dainties, which they value so much, are rejected by them, and yet don't see what 'tis that they relish in their Room, they presently conclude that these are Madmen or Fools, or, as they say, *Visionaries*; and indeed they call all that most Divine Business of Eternal Moment, that one Thing necessary, which to them is invisible, *Fooleries* and *Chimera's*, as our *Parrhasius* does here, who in all Human Sciences would fain be taken for a Great Man, forgetting the Words of the Apostle, that * *The Things of the Spirit of God*, and *The Wisdom of God*, are in the sight of natural and worldly Wisemen *Foolishness*, when they are really Fools themselves in their vain Wisdom, which in reality, and in the sight of God, is mere Foolishness.

* 1 Cor. 2.
14. and 3. 19.

The Foolish Opinion therefore of *Parrhasius* does not in the least hinder but that the true Mystics, who are despised by him, may have true *Wisdom and Learning*, God so wisely Illuminating and Governing their Understanding, which they have entirely yielded up to his Love, so as to enable them rightly to understand, and prudently to order and perform every Thing that he shall think good and necessary for them, as well with regard to Things Internal as External, without suffering them to be employed or distracted about any thing unprofitable or hurtful to them. Which indeed, is true, and solid Wisdom, and Understanding, and such as every Man of a sound Judgment ought highly to esteem and commend.

Parrhasius's Opinion of the Mystics of no weight. The contrary true.

That great Contempt of the Mystical and Allegorical Writers, which *Parrhasius* shews here, and is very common with Mr. *Le Clerc*, is such, that they do not agree together about it. When Mr. *Le Clerc* and *Parrhasius* meet with Mystical and Allegorical Things in the Writings of those that hold the Doctrine of Divine Grace inwardly operating in us, or when they are sought out and shewn in the Holy Scriptures, they look upon them then as *Idle Fancies*, and *Chimeras*; but when they stand in need of some Mystical

Parrhasius and Mr. Le Clerc do not agree in their manner of reproaching the Mystics.

or

* In the Preface to Liberius, de Sancto Amore.

† Ibid. p. 281.

|| See his Notes upon his French New Testament, Heb. 1. 5. Gal. 4. 24. and many other Places.

* 1 Cor. 10, 11.

† P. 378.

or Allegorical Words, either to support the Socinian Notions, or to procure Authority to themselves, or to shew their Learning, they fly to them as to Things of the utmost weight and Importance, and such as are full of Force and Wisdom, as may appear from the following Instances. *Liberius*, one that's well known to *Parrhasius* and Mr. Le Clerc, * where in one place he imputes the Mystical and Allegorical Interpretations of the Scriptures, by him called *Fooleries*, to a Heathenish Original, namely, to the Study of Rhetoric, yet says, that our delivery from that Wicked Custom of seeking Mysteries every where, is owing to the same Heathens. † By reading the Writings of the Heathens, says he, — we reap the advantage — of shaking off that WICKED CUSTOM of seeking Mysteries in every Thing, which is a matter of no small Moment. Mr. Le Clerc using this great advantage, has indeed in all his Interpretations of the Scriptures, which proceeding from a Spirit of Infinite Wisdom, may be thought to contain great Mysteries, taken great Care to abtain from that Wicked Custom of seeking Mysteries therein: Yea, whensoever the Sacred Penmen of the New Testament, quote any Places out of the Old, in a Sense evidently Mystical and Allegorical, he || tells us more than once, that they are not the meanings of those Inspired Writers, but only of the Jews, which therefore the Apostles and Evangelists applied to them as Arguments *ad Hominem*, and in order to convince them in their own way of Reasoning, and at their own Weapons, how improper and foolish soever they were in themselves. Nay, in his French Translation he has even perverted that Axiom of the Apostle, which confirms those Senses, * All these Things happened to them (the Israelites) in a Figure (or Typically;) which he renders thus, all these Things happened unto them for Ensamples. But when that Wicked Custom of seeking for Mysteries in every Thing, can in any wise contribute to shew his great skill in Profane Learning, he more than once takes it up again as an excellent Custom, and makes a very serious use of it in Interpreting the Writings, and even the ridiculous Fables of the Heathens, so that even in the absurd, obscene, and impious Fables of *Hercules*, *Adonis*, *Ceres*, and the like, he very gravely finds out many Mystical and Allegorical meanings, and often speaks great Things of them in his *Bibliothèque*, in *Moreri*, and even in the † *Parrhasiana* themselves. Yea, and what you will say is very strange, he resumes and makes

makes use of that *Wicked Custom* in his Interpretations of the Scripture, when it can in any wise serve to promote the *Socinian Cause*, as I have shewn in the foregoing Letter, and as *Liberius* himself expressly confesses, saying, || *I have observed innumerable Things that were done before the Gospel, were only shadows of those Things which were to come to pass under the Gospel, and this I have Learned in several Places from the Apostles:* But it almost surpasses all Admiration, that he, in order to establish and support either his own Tenents, or his *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Glosses, which weaken and enervate the Scriptures, should yet reckon himself among the Number of those that have been illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and had extraordinary Gifts and Revelations conferred upon them, or who in supernatural and Mystical Theology, have experienced the sublimest Things, and have even felt the Divine Touches of the other Life. *Liberius* in the Preface to his Epistles, being to give a Reason why his new Discoveries were unknown to the first Reformers, whom he had before Praised, speaks thus: **THE SPIRIT BLOWS**, when, and where it listeth, and also as much as it listeth; and sometimes it hides Things from those (the Reformers) upon whom it vouchsafes a greater Measure of **LIGHT**, which it **REVEALS** to others (to *Liberius* and *Mr. Le Clerc*) who **ENJOY** the **SAME** in a lesser Degree only. See here *Liberius* moved with the Spirit, and endued with the Light, Illumination and Revelation of the Spirit; and yet the same Things, and Words in others and in the Mystics, *Parrhasius* and *Mr. Le Clerc*, brand with the odious Names of *Fooleries* and *Chimera's*, and will have it that they are nothing but the airy effects of *Fanaticism* and *Enthusiasm*. And in his Preface to his French Translation of the *New Testament*, the same Person says, that in Translating, and Composing his Notes or Glosses, *His Mind was filled with such variety of meanings, and they gave him so great inward Pleasure and Satisfaction, that he ought in every Page to thank the Divine Goodness, that before the expectation of that great Day of Rewards (or Retributions) God had vouchsafed to give him a foretaste of them, and enabled him in a lively manner to Contemplate those Benefits, which he will at last bestow upon us (in the other Life.)* Indeed, neither the more sublime part of Mystical Theology which is called the *Extraordinary*; nor those that have made the greatest Progress in the same, exhibit, comprehend

|| Epist. Theolog. Liberii. p. 61.

prehend or promise greater Things to their Candidates, than Mr. *Le Clerc* says here that he has experienced and felt. But if Mr. *Le Clerc* in Reality felt any such Thing, he ought, to prevent his being imposed upon by the Enemy, to have Learned from the true Mystics, that Satan, who as the Apostle witnesses, can transform himself into an Angel of Light, can also imitate Divine Sweetnesses, Divine Sensations, and Divine Contemplations, by injecting the Fallacious Appearances of such Things into those, who, tho' they continue in the Element of Corrupt Nature, yet dare thrust themselves into, and treat of Things Divine; and that they may the more boldly and cheerfully weaken and destroy such Things in reality, the crafty Enemy does by those false Appearances very often excite and animate them in the Prosecution of that unhappy Design.

Why, although they commend the Mystics, they are more inclined to hate them.

Had *Parrhasius* well considered all these Things when he composed his Anti-mystic Censure, without doubt he would have been a little more cautious, at least not to contradict both himself and Mr. *Le Clerc*, who at other times, and please ye, commend the Mystical Divinity, and esteem themselves as mighty Proficients therein: Altho' it must be acknowledged, they have taken great Care to let it be known, that for the most part they incline to take part against the Mystics, and that in the main they have a very great aversion to that way: The Reason whereof I conceive to be this, namely, because Mystical Theology is not only the very scourge of all vain Studies, which yet they are wholly intent upon; but that 'tis also, if we may speak the Truth, the most specific Antidote against *Socinianism* and *Pelagianism* that possibly can be. For all that Theology is wholly founded upon the Presence of God and his Operations in us, enabling us to put off and totally extinguish Sin, and filling us with the purest Light and Love of God, and revealing and bringing us into the Living Knowledge of the most Holy Trinity, and giving us a foretaste of all the Secrets and Heavenly Blessings thereof, in so far as it shall please God to communicate them to those that Love his Name. So that 'tis utterly impossible for a true Mystic to be a *Pelagian* or *Socinian*, and vice versa.

*XI. To ob-
trude some*

Things as Oracles what? And who does so?

XI. That Poiret would have those Things, which

Parrhasius

Parrhasius just now noted, looked upon *as so many Oracles*, is what he infers from a Principle of Self-Love only. If Mr. *Poiret* commends some Things, his Custom is to appeal to the Scriptures, and to every ones Conscience examining itself in the sight of God, and he shews, as far as he is able, the Reasons and Causes of whatsoever he proposes, as they very well know who have been at any Pains to consider his Writings. For in this Case *Parrhasius* is (from a Principle of Blindness) guilty of that which he blames in others; for all his Censure, and all the Reproaches that 'tis filled with, are like the Ancient Oracles pronounced after an Enthusiastic way, without giving any Reason or Proof for what he says.

XII. Who cannot but admire the Blindness of a Man that accuses another of *Seducing* well meaning People, who is himself Universally suspected of having a mind to *seducer* and turn away Men from the Knowledge and Sense of Sin, both Original and Actual, and especially of that which is Internal and Spiritual? Of withdrawing and *seducing* them from God and his Spirit, the alone Author and Fountain of all Light, Love and Vertue in us? Of misleading and *seducing* them from acknowledging and adoring the most Holy Trinity and all the Myteries and Wonders of God? Of hindering and *seducing* them from asking the living and salutary Sense of the Scriptures through the Assistance of God's Holy Spirit? All which indeed make up the Life and Substance of Christianity: When yet he, whom he very Imprudently and falsely accuses of such Practices, does exhort all Men, as far as he can by his Writings, to those Things, that is, to the necessary Requisites and Causes of Salvation, and to Salvation itself, whether Created or Increated. *Parrhasius* moreover may know, that I never persuaded any Body to leave their Party, or any Thing else relating to their External Worship or Condition, and to come over to me; I have rather persuaded many to the contrary: I never kept any Meetings, I teach no Body, nor do I desire to teach: I Write: And I am so much *ashamed* of what I do Write, that (against *Parrhasius's* Opinion) I publish all to the World. And if in some Things, I have concealed my Name, I will take care even now, by owning them, that no Body shall think I am ashamed of them: But behold whether a Principle of Blindness leads one! *Parrhasius* himself is even ashamed of his Friends first Book.

XII. Of the Shameful Crime of *Seducing* well-meaning People, objected by *Parrhasius*.

* p. 352.

† Parrh. p.
160.

|| Vid. Epist.
Gal. pro de
Wayeno con-
tra Parrhasi.
p. 34. & 55.

He had * promised to give an Account of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Books, as being well acquainted with them: He had commended these Words of *Polibius*, as the Rule and Standard of Historical Fidelity; † *To suppress any matter of Fact in History, is no less a LYE than to mention a Thing that was never done*: And yet immediately in the Chapter of the Catalogue of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Books, he conceals the first and Principal of them all, viz. The Theological Epistles of *Liberius* of Holy Love, tho' he knew very well that by the now dispersed Learned Men of the College of *Saumur*, (where they were Printed and occasioned great disturbances) they were every where both in Conversation and in Print || ascribed to him. He is also ashamed of his Epistles of Inspiration, which he would seem to Father upon one *M. N.* And is it not from a Consciousness that he ought to be ashamed of what he does, that he assumes such a variety of borrowed Names, as of *Liberius*, *Parrhasius*, *Phereponus*, and many more which I now pass by? The same Person is also generally said to propagate *Socinianism*, that is, to exercise the Art of Seducing. He is ashamed to own it; I wish he was likewise ashamed of doing it.

Finally, If *Parrhasius* by calling those, who agree with me in the same Sentiments, *Simple*, or *well-meaning People*, take that Word in the Evangelical Sense for those, who laying aside all Artifices and Frauds both of their own Hearts, and of their own and others deceitful Reason, surrender themselves simply to God, and to Things Eternal to be instructed by the Spirit and Wisdom of *Christ*, who in them is all Things; then he plainly shews himself to be a Scoffer; nor is it matter of Reproach, but rather a Commendation of me, that by what I have published, such *Simple Ones* have been persuaded of the Truth: For such, and no other, *Christ* desires for his Disciples; to such the Father opens his Heavenly Treasures; and *Christ* thanks him for revealing them to the *Simple* and to *Babes*, and for hiding them from those that are Wise and Prudent in their own Conceit, as being full of that Proud and swelling Wisdom of their own Reason, which they have acquired by their skill and Industry, and in which they Glory. But, seeing 'tis evident that by this Objection of *Simplicity*, *Parrhasius* would denote, and possibly ridicule too those, who he thinks, as to Parts, Subtilty, Learning and Wildom,

Wisdom, cannot compare with him or with Mr. *Le Clerc*; he may know, if he pleases, that this can be ascribed to nothing but to his own great Arrogance, by such as well know that many of these he contemns, are not inferior to *Parrhasius* himself either in Sense and good Judgment, or in Solid Erudition, and that possibly they could teach even him many Things, and some of the greatest Moment too, and that also in more kinds of Learning than one; all which such Scoffers as he, and those that admire and are so full of themselves, are yet Ignorant of.

XIII. From that Scoffing Spirit it comes that *Parrhasius* calls what I have published, *Ridiculous* (Notions about Spirituals, or) *Spiritualities*. But the case as to them is such, that they who have read and understood them, the more Learned and the more Pious they have been, the more they have esteemed them, and have even thanked me for what I published, altho' they liv'd at a great distance, and were not before known to me, except perhaps by common Fame. And that *Parrhasius* may not ridicule them also, as if possibly they deserved to be ranked among the *Simple*, I shall take the Liberty, out of many, to name one, whom even Mr. *Le Clerc* will scarce venture to call *Simple*; and that is the Honourable and Learned Mr. *BOYLE*. He, having read a little Book which I published in *French*, entituled the *Theology of the Heart*, * was so affected with it, and esteemed it so much, that but a little before his Death he caused his Thanks and Good Wishes to be returned me for it, And many others equally Illustrious for Birth, Learning and Verue, have done the like; but, because they are still alive, I shall not name them. Some of the gravest Divines, yea Professors of Divinity, famous for their Learning and Piety, have been so far from looking upon that Book, which briefly contains the essentials of Mystic Theology, and of every Thing that I have Written, to have nothing in it but *ridiculous Spiritualities*, that they have caused it to be Translated and Printed in the *German* Language, after I had published a Second Edition thereof in *French*. These Things I am forced to mention, that every one may see, and that *Parrhasius* also may see (and be ashamed) by these Examples, how much he deceives others or is deceived himself, when after his Scoffing way he says, *That I seduce the Simple by the ridiculous Spiritualities which I*

XIII. Of
Parrhasius's
Charge of Ri-
diculous Spi-
ritualities,

* *La Theol.*
du Cœur,

publish, and that therefore I ought to be ashamed of what I have done.

This Accusation obliges me to publish a Catalogue of all the Books that I have Printed.

Parrhasius, or some Body for him, will possibly say, that he did not speak these Things of any one particular Book that I have published; but more generally and indiscriminately of all, of which tho' possibly one or two may not deserve that Censure, yet it holds good as to most of the rest, that the *Simple* are often seduced by the ridiculous *Spiritualities*, which they contain. Now to this accusation I can make no other Answer, but by giving a short account of the Names and Contents of all the Books which I have published, that so they that have a mind to judge of this matter, may be able, upon the best Information, to pass a right Judgment upon it. But altho' I am forced and compelled to this by the Injustice of *Parrhasius's* Censure; yet I shall thereby satisfy a great many, that desire to know what I have published: And at the same time shall frustrate *Parrhasius's* Design, which is, by raising and spreading such malicious and confused Calumnies against my Books, to prevail with his Readers not so much as to look into them, because they either oppose or utterly destroy his Errors, or fortify the Readers against them.

An account of the Author's own Works. Cogitationes Rationales de Deo, &c.

The first Work that I composed and published, was Printed in the Year 1677, under the Title of *Cogitationes Rationales de Deo, anima & malo*. Which seeing 'tis sufficiently known, there is no occasion for me to say any Thing more particularly of it. Should I say nothing, they that have read that Work will observe, that even then my aim and intention was to do what I could, according to the measure of my Knowledge, not to seduce, but to bring all those that Love to Philosophize, and especially those that were Favourers of the *Cartesian* Philosophy, which I was not unacquainted with, to know, love and worship God after a more perfect manner, and to recommend Peace and Charity among the several contending Parties of Christians. In the Year 1687, I Published a Second Edition of the same Work with many additional Notes and Accessions, keeping the Text of the First Edition intire, and by itself. I know indeed, that this Edition did a little displease some, because in the Preliminary Dissertation I shewed the Weakness and Insufficiency of Reason, and consequently of *Philosophical Religion*, founded in Reason, which sometimes degenerates into mere *Atheism*: Or because in

my Notes I advanced Things quite different from the Opinions of a great many, relating to Predetermination and Liberty; but for that very Reason it was the more acceptable to much the greater part of Readers; and it ought to have been so too to the rest, had they not been byas'd some how or other, when they saw the first Edition, which they had approved of before, Reprinted without the least Variation; and when they were at liberty to pass over the Accessions, although I prefer some of them to the Text itself. But seeing both Editions have been now a long time out of Print, I will take care in the Third, which possibly may come out very soon, that the Text of the first shall be also Reprinted without any Alteration, and if I make any Additions or Amendments, they shall be inserted in the Notes and Accessions only.

Next to this I published my *Divine Oeconomy* in French, contained in Six Books, or in Seven small Volumes in Octavo. In that Work my Design was, according to the best of my Knowledge and Ability, to bring not Philosophers only, but all Lovers of true Divinity, and solid Piety, to Love God and their Neighbour, by proposing such Principles as are perfectly agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, to the Nature of Things, and to Peace and true Charity towards the several Sects of Christians, (I mean such as receive and agree in the essential Fundamentals of Salvation.) Which performance gave no small satisfaction to a great many. But because I there shewed that the *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Principles of *Philosophical Religion*, founded in the Faculty of Reason and in Criticks, are inconsistent with the Fundamentals of Christianity, and with the living Principles of the inward Operations of the Spirit of Christ, and of Eternal Salvation; and every where confuted them, and particularly as they are often stated in some Books published by Mr. *Le Clerc*; therefore being mightily incensed against the whole Work, in his *Bibliothèque* he quarrels with it in such a manner, that he either conceals or perverts the Contents thereof, to discourage his Readers, if possible, from looking into it, although such Principles are there to be met with, as easily solve all the Difficulties, concerning the *Origin of Evil*, *Liberty* and the like, about which he and Mr. *Baile* and others have lately raised such a deal of Dust, and which the Atheists boast of as

*The Divine
Oeconomy.*

inexplicable, as many learned, who have given themselves leave to consider the matter, have very ingenuously acknowledged. Finally, these Six Books of the *Divine Oeconomy*, were also published at *Frankfort*, in *Latin* (*Anno 1705*, in two Volumes in *Quarto*) and though I did not Translate it my self, yet I read and revised it, and in some places, but very rarely, made some Amendments before it came out, having premised towards the end of the Preface, an Advertisement concerning what particularly relates to it. Many have also wished to have the same work published in the vulgar Tongues, as the *Highb* and *Low Dutch*, and even in *English*; which had been done long since, had not the largeness of the Work, and the greatness of the Trouble hitherto hindered it.

The Irenicum.
La Paix de
bonnes ames
dans Tous les
Partis du
Christianisme

My *Irenicum Universelle*, accommodated to the quieting of good Mens Minds of all the Parties and Perswasions of Christendom, came out also the same Year in *French*, occasioned by the very bitter Censure of a certain Divine, upon a Letter which I had written on that subject, and which a Friend of mine had published. In that Book I did not in the least swerve from my Principal Design of bringing Men over to the Love of God, and to mutual Love and Charity with one another, by the real Practice of the Essentials of Christianity, by conforming themselves, where the Love of God and of their Neighbour requires it, to such things as are meerly accessory, and which they may use with a safe Conscience. The Book is now out of Print, but it came out (*Anno 1702.*) in the *German* Language, Translated from the *French*; in which I my self made several Emendations. It is also since Translated into *Latin* by a Friend of mine, and published with several other Tracts in the Second Volume of *Solid Erudition*; but in that, I altered and corrected many more Things than I did in the *German* Edition, as I have shewn in the proper Place.

2 Of *Solid Erudition*, &c.

To these I added (*Anno 1692.*) *Three Books de Eruditione Solida, Superficiaria & falsa*, which are lately again published more correct and more full, with a Defence of them. These, a little after the first Edition, were Reprinted at *Leipsick*, with a Dissertation by the Famous *Thomasius* prefix'd to them, concerning all the Books that I had then published, wherein that worthy Person shews that he had a very different Opinion of them, from what *Parthasius* has: But although

though he differ from me in some Philosophical Points, yet the good Things that he has said of me and my Writings are such, That I cannot in Modesty repeat them, unless I may be permitted to say, That they are directly contrary to Parrhasius's wicked Suggestion, viz. That I published them with a Design to seduce Mankind; which, surely, whether it be a true or false Censure, I shall leave others, that either have, or will peruse any of my Writings, to Judge.

The little Book of the Education of Children, written by way of Letter, was first published by another, and afterwards by my self, with some Additions. That Book, although it met with some great Adversaries among the Clergy, because it was published in *High Dutch* by a Religious Pastor, and believed to be written by another Person, who were therefore both Prosecuted by them with no small hatred; yet none of my Books found more favourers and approvers every where, who also would not suffer it to continue long in the *French* Tongue only. I have again published it in *Latin*, with several Additions, and have also subjoined my Answers to all the Objections made against it. I shall say nothing more particularly of this neither, unless it be that I would earnestly Desire the Readers to take notice whether or no I have therein practised the *Art of seducing the simple* (who are chiefly among Children) by *Ridiculous Spiritualities*, as Parrhasius's Censure has it.

Of the Education of Children.

In the Book Entituled, *A short Idea of the Pacifick and Mystick Theology*, and of the Authors that have treated of the same, which came out Anno 1702. I acknowledge that the *General Idea of Mystical Theology*, and also the *Letter concerning the Mystical Authors*, are mine. The *Latin* Translation indeed is not mine; But I revised and made some Additions to it, and in the last Edition thereof, viz. in the Second Volumn of *Solid Erudition*, I enlarg'd it yet more. I writ them both in *French*, and they were first published in that Language, at the end of the *German Theology*, of which anon.

Theologia Mystica, ejusque Auctorum Idea brevior.

So much for the Books of which I am the Author my self. As to those that follow, all that's mine is only the Labour of Publishing, and sometimes of Translating them, with several Prefaces, and also some Accessions and Notes, together with the Contents or Arguments of the Chapters.

Other Peoples Books Published by me.

*All Antonia
Bourignon's
Works.*

* *Monitum
necessarium
ad acta Lipsi-
ens.*

All Antonia Bourignon's Works in Nineteen Volumes in French, excepting one or two Books that were published before. I contributed nothing to the *German* and *Dutch* Editions in Twelve or Fourteen Volumes, nothing to the *English*, into which Language Six of her Books are already Translated, and more are daily expected; nor yet to the *Latin* Translations of one or two of her Books. But though any single Book may be had apart, yet the Bookseller chose rather, for Brevity sake, to reduce them all into so many Volumes. To them I prefix'd an *Apologetical Preface*, and subjoin'd the Continuation of that Virgins Life, to her Death. And to the whole Work I annexed the *Divine Vision* of John Engelbert, of the three *Estates*, *Ecclesiastical*, *Political* and *Oeconomical*, Translated into *French*. Soon after these Works appeared together in Nineteen Volumes, some one inserted a most invidious Account of them in the *Acta Eruditorum Lipsi*. To which I replied by a publick *Advertisement*: * But seeing that Advertisment was, in my absence, printed with some Alterations, which made my Expressions too sharp and severe; That, as to the Style, I cannot acknowledge for mine. The Author of that Account being thereby exasperated, did indeed write a *Defence thereof*; but to such a Monster of a Defence I thought no other Answer was due except those few Pages which were added to the first Edition of the Books of *Erudition*. And now that the Author of that Defence is dead, and that I am perswaded the Rest of the Collectors of those Acts had no hand therein, I have left those Pages out of the last Edition, not to give any occasion of Offence to any one. Now seeing the scope and substance of *Antonia Bourignon's* Books is, (as I have observed in my *Irenicum*, and in the Letter concerning the Mystical Writers) to convince Men of their Original corruption deriv'd from *Adam*, and exceedingly increased by their own actual sins, and to perswade them to renounce that Corruption by dying to the worldly and Diabolical Life of the old *Adam* through the Power of the Cross of *Christ*, that being cleans'd and purify'd, they may be made fit Vessels to receive the Holy Spirit promised by *Christ*, and be by him illuminated, governed, and at last glorified; whether *Parrhasius* will with open Mouth call these Things Ridiculous, and say that they are invented only to seduce Mankind, I do not certainly know: This I know,

know, That not a few have been rescued from the Snares of the World and of the Devil, by reading the Books of this Holy Virgin; and that a great many still will yet be delivered by them.

The Books of the *Imitation of Christ*, Translated by me into *French*, for the use of Protestants, under the Title of *Kempis made common*, were republished Anno 1701, more correct, and were very acceptable to all serious Protestants, some of whom, as I am told, have imitated my Edition in the *German Language*.

Kempis common.

The two Tomes of the *Theology of the Heart* (of which above) have had two Editions, whereof the last, Anno 1697, is the larger and more correct. 'Tis a Collection of small Tracts; The first Tome contains 1. A small Treatise called, *The enlightened Shepherd*, being a Youth that kept Sheep, who by Purity and Simplicity of Heart, was brought to a wonderful degree of the Love of God, and to a surprising Knowledge of him and his Works. 2. A Treatise of Christian Perfection, said to be written by a *Milaneze Woman*, wherein she shews admirably well the way, how, by denying every thing that is not God, we may arrive at a State of being governed most purely and perfectly by God. 3. Another by the same Person, of the Destruction of Self-love, of which she detects all the lurking Holes, that so by driving it out of them, the Divine Operation and Presence, and the Divine Love may at last find a place in us. The *Second Tome* contains, 4. A Treatise of an unknown Virgin, concerning the Distinction between the sensible Graces or Operations of God, and those that are meerly Spiritual; and also of Eight sorts of Prayer. 5. A Treatise of the Religious *John de S. Samson*, blind from a Child, of raising the Love of God to its highest Degree by the way of Aspirations. 6. An Abridgement of Mystical Theology, by *J. Rigoleuc*, shewing how one may adhere to God by Prayer and Purity of Heart. 7. A Treatise of the Education of Children.

La Theologie du Cœur.

There were afterwards published in *French*, Anno 1691, *Three Dialogues of Catharine Adorna Fiescana*, commonly called *Catharine of Genoa*, under the Title of the *Theology of Love*, which for the Method, Order and Contrivance of Divine Wisdom, far exceed all the Human Skill of the Learned, and which breath nothing but the most Ardent, the most Pure, and

La Theologie de l'Amour.

and most Transcendent Love of God. To these is added her *Life*; and I think all of them are such that even the Malice of the Devils themselves cannot say, they deserve to be laughed at, or that the well-meaning can be in any Danger of being seduced by them.

**La Theologie
de la Croix
de Jes. Christ.**

The Theology of the Cross of Jesus Christ, Translated by me from the *Latin*, into *French*, and published Anno 1696, shew in the Works and Life of that Holy Matron, *Angela de Foligni*, who lived in the Thirteenth Century, how a Soul, that gives itself up to Prayer, and to imitate the Life of *Jesus Christ* by the way of the Cross, may obtain the end of its Creation and Redemption, which is the most pure Love of God, and the solid and certain Knowledge and Enjoyment of the Truth; and how also it may attain to many fore-tastes of God and of Things Divine, which the infinite Wisdom of God, dispenseth as he thinks fit, to those that Love him. I also Translated into *French*, and added to this the Fourteen Exercises of the most pious *Blosius* upon the Passion of *Christ*. All which seeing they most powerfully set forth the solid Substance of the Gospel, and conduce to bring all Men to their chief and supreme End, none will say that they contain Things Ridiculous, or that they tend to seduce Men, without being guilty of the same Malicious and Blasphemous accusation against the Gospel of *Christ* itself.

**La Theologie
reelle ou Ger-
manique.**

The real (or German) Theology, which I Translated out of *High Dutch* into *French*, together with two small Treatises, one concerning the *Restoration*, and the other the *Regeneration* of Man, both in *Low Dutch*, and by me also Translated into *French*, to which I also annexed some *Spiritual* and *Mystical* Aphorisms collected from the Works of *P. John de S. Samson*, came out in the Year 1700. To this there is prefixed a Preface divided into four Parts, and is longer than the *German Theology* itself; the first Part Treats of Things relating to the Books themselves; the next contains a shorter and clearer Idea of the *Mystical Theology*, and is evidently proved even by the Suffrage of Human Reason. This part was mentioned above. The third contains an *Apology* for *Mystical Divinity* against an *Historical Treatise*, written in *French*, containing the Opinion of a *Protestant Divine* about *Mystical Theology*; The chief Foundati-

**Traité Histo-
rique conte-
nant le Juge-
ment d'un
Protestant,
&c.**

ons and Contents whereof are there overthrown and Refuted. In the fourth, the Grounds of a certain French Book, written by an Anonymous Abbot, against the same Theology, are also destroy'd. To the whole Work, *The Letter concerning the Mysticks*, but lately mentioned, with the *Catalogue*, is subjoyned. The Approbations of the *German Theology*, which I have inserted in the Preface, both from many Eminent Roman Catholicks and Protestants, do sufficiently vindicate that Book from the Calumny of being *Ridiculous*, or of tending to seduce Men into Errors: And as to *Mystical Theology*, What we have observed * above, with Relation to the Nature and Design thereof, does the same thing.

In the Year 1701, there was Reprinted with a new Preface, under the Title of *The real Christian*, in two Tomes in French, 1. *The Life of the Marquess de Renty*; which had been often published in France, but was then grown scarce; and if Parrhasius reckons this among Deceitful and Seducing Fooleries, all those that fear God, and even some of his own Friends will be against him: For although that most illustrious Person was in his Heart and Actions truly a Mystic, yea, and a Roman Catholick; yet nevertheless, such is the Power of Truth, that it extorted from Dr. Burnet, now Bishop of Salisbury, to whom Mr. Le Clerc dedicates some of his Works, this (a) Testimony, That that Life had nothing that looks fabulous in it; and that it contains so many illustrious instances of Vertue, that he that Practised them ought justly to be looked upon as one of the greatest Examples that France has in this Age produced. 2. In the Second Tome, is the Life of a certain Religious Lady, a Disciple of Mr. de Renty, in whom the same most admirable and solid Vertues and Graces did shine as in him. Mrs. Bourignon used always to carry along with her a little Book, because she greatly esteemed it, wherein most of our Saviour's Words were written, and to which some Exclamations upon the Life of Grace, were annexed: These I got Transcribed out of that Book, which I have by me, and added them to the end of this Second Volumn.

Much about this time, a certain Friend of mine of singular Learning and Piety, sent me a little History of the Life and Death of a certain pious Youth, who was one of those that fled from France upon the Account of his Religion, which History he

* N^o 10.

Le Chrétien
reël.

(a) In his
Preface to the
Life of Mat-
thew Hale.

Le Saint
Refugiè.

writ upon his own Knowledge: This I published under the title of the *Religious Refugee*; or *the exemplary Life and Death of Wernerus*. In which, besides many powerful Examples and Motives to persuade us to enter upon a truly Christian Life, and to deny our selves, there is nothing that's *Ridiculous*, or that tends to *seduce* any one.

9
Catechisme
Chrétien
pour la vie
interieure.

The Christian Catechism for the Internal Life, written in French by Mr. Olier, when it was grown so Scarce, that 'twas not to be found, I gave the Copy which I had to be Reprinted, Anno 1703, and to the same I added some *Exclamations* concerning the *Life of Grace*, which are very suitable to that Subject. This Catechism, having first shewn in a most lively manner the Immense Wickedness and Impotence of our Corruption, does so clearly set before us the absolute necessity of the *Grace of God*, and that most excellent state of the Christian Life, which is illuminated with the Divine Grace, that very few or none have done the like in so few Words, so effectually, and in Expressions which occur almost every where in the Holy Scriptures themselves.

10
L'Ecole du
pur Amour de
Dieu, &c.

Having afterwards procured the wonderful Life of a Poor, illiterate Country Maid, exceeding all that we can imagine of the Christian and Mystical Theory and Practice, I gave it, with a Preface prefixed to it, to be reprinted with this Title, *The School of the Pure Love of God, opened to the Learned as well as the Unlearned, in the admirable Life of a Poor illiterate Servant Maid, named ARMELLE NICOLAS, lately Deceased in Brittany: Written by a Friend of hers, devoted to God, Anno, 1704*. In this Life, the wonderful Solidity, and Sublimeness of the Things she treats of, whether Christian, Spiritual or Divine, both Speculative and Practical, seem to vye with one another, which shall have the Preference: I confess I have never seen any Thing of the kind like it: So that I was infinitely surprized, when I was told, and afterwards read the short account which the Author of the French Tracts entituled, * *The History of the Works of the Learned*, gives of this most Divine Life: In that account he has purposely suppressed the more solid and useful, and picked out all the most accessory, external and insignificant Things he could light on, and which he thought People would either condemn or laugh at, especially wherein they relate to the *Externals* peculiar to the *Roman-Catholics*, and which

* Histoire
des Ouvrages
des Savants.
Avril, Mai,
Juin, 1703.

which he often Comments upon very ridiculously. I cannot but wonder that in this he would imitate the method of Profane Wranglers, and that he did not consider, that by the same manner, not only the Divine Writings of *De Renty*, *Kempis*, *St. Bernard*, but even the Holy Scriptures themselves, as I have * else-where observed, may be maliciously exposed to the Laughter and Ridicule of Impious Men. He is also mistaken and imposes upon his Readers in endeavouring to persuade them that what I have said either in this Work, or in any other of those that I have mentioned, relating to the Worship or Opinions of the *Roman Catholics*, is by me published, defended and so favourably represented, with a design to tempt Protestants to desert their side, and to come over to the other; this is what never entered into my Mind, yea, 'tis directly contrary to my Opinion, which is only this, that Men, of whatever Party or Persuasion they be, should not hate one another upon the account of some Externals, nor despise such Things in others as are sometimes most Solid and Divine, nor reject them upon the account of some Accessories of little moment, which tho' they may be called Errors, are yet very consistent with the Love of God, and with his special Grace and Gifts. In a Word, it has always been my Opinion, and still is, that every one, without changing sides, should accustom himself to see and acknowledge the Operations and Power of the Spirit of *Christ* in others, tho' at the same time, as to Ceremonies and some particular Opinions they may behold some Imperfections in them: This, I say, we ought to do, to the end that, agreeing, living and growing up together in Christian Love and Charity, so highly commended by *Christ*, we may be made fit to receive a fuller measure of the promised Spirit of Love and Truth, and thereby be made one with *Christ* and the Father in the Holy Spirit, according to the Prayer of *Christ* himself for us; and that thereby the World may know that *CHRIST* is sent by the Father, the true Saviour, to save his own, by the Communication of his Holy Spirit, from their Sins, and to deliver them from Diabolical Hatred, introduced by *Cain* and *Satan* upon the account of External Worship; and that he may restore us all into the perfect bond of Eternal Union with God, which is Charity and Life Eternal.

* In my Letter
of the Mystics.
§. 28.

The Spiritual Tracts of M. Guion.

The same Year having had sent me from abroad a Manuscript of the most Celebrated Madam Guion, never Printed before, which to me seemed to be of great worth, Importance, and a Key to all her Writings, I determined not only to publish that, but also to get the other little Treatises of that Author, which were abroad in the World before, to be reprinted together. Here I ought to take notice, that in the first Edition of her two Tracts Published in Holland, 1699, I did nothing but only advised and encouraged the Printing of them: And this I do, because I have been informed that some who, according as they deserve, highly esteem those Tracts, have taken it ill, that in the Preface to the First Edition, altho' he that writ it does for the most part speak well of every Thing, yet that he seems to express some Things not only coldly, but even with an Ironical Air. This Preface then is not mine; but only that prefixed to the Second Edition in French, with this Title, * *The Spiritual Tracts of Madam J. M. B. de la Mothe Guion, enlarged with a Treatise of hers never before Published, called the TORRENTS, with a General Preface concerning the Author's Person and Doctrine, and the Persecutions raised against her.* Those Tracts are, 1. *A short and easy Method of Prayer*; which indeed has given such general Satisfaction, that it is already Published in High and Low Dutch, and in Latin and English. 2. That rare and truly profound and incomparable Treatise, that real and lasting Monument of Divine Wisdom, *the Torrents*, wherein under the Emblem of Torrents of Water are described the admirable ways of Faith, whereby those Souls are Purified, who are here united to God, and whom he thinks fit to chuse out to be the great Instruments of his Hand in this World. 3. The most sublime, and most solid Interpretation of the Canticles of Solomon, as it is truly referable to those Souls: And then 4. the next Year, a Tract of hers in French, † entitled, *a Rule for the Associates of the Infancy of Jesus, the Model of Perfection for all States, &c.* Which was but lately transmitted to me from England.

* Les Opuscules Spirituels de Madame J. M. B. de la Mothe Guion, nouv. Edit. &c.

† Regle des Associés à l'Enfance de Jesus, &c.

‖ Christianarum virtutum Insinuatio facilis.

Lastly, I published in Latin a small Treatise call'd, ‖ *an easy Insinuation of the Christian Vertues, accommodated to all Capacities*, which was put into my Hands by a Learned and Pious Friend for that end; the Title briefly hints at the Subject it treats of; but my Preface prefixed to it shews it more at large.

I have moreover in my Hands a Treatise written *Faith and* by another Anonymous Friend, not only *Illustrious Reason* com- for his Learning and Piety, but also for his many o- *pared.* ther singular good Qualities; it treats of *Faith and Reason*, with some Accessions concerning *Perfection and Felicity*, wherein Mr. *Lock's* pernicious Principles (which Mr. *Le Clerc* has also adopted as his own) which prostitute Divine Faith to be trampled upon by profane Reason, are utterly overthrown: But seeing that Treatise is not yet * published, (tho' very * *This was* speedily designed for the Press) I cannot yet appeal *since Printed* to that as I have done to the rest, whether *Parrhasius* in Latin, and does justly or unjustly say, that *all that I have Published is but very* (of my own or others) *is nothing but ridiculous Spiritu- lately Trans-* alities, and that I ought to be ashamed of endea- *lated and Pub-* vouring so much to seduce People with them: Whe- *lished in Eng-* ther this be so or not, any one that will take the *lish.* trouble, may better inform himself from the above-mentioned Books, if he will but look into them, than our *Parrhasius* or *Le Clerc*, who against all his own Rules of Critics, pretends to Censure such Things as he never read, or which possibly in the main he never looked into. Such is the Serpentine Disposition of our Corrupt Nature, or of *Pelagianism*, that 'tis afraid, should it listen to the Words of Divine Truth, of being Incharmed with them; and therefore it purposely turns its Ears away from them, even as they do of whom the Royal Prophet speaks.

† *Lingua venenum pestifera gerunt,*
Auresque claudunt Consiliis, velut
Obturat Aures callida aspis.
Que Magicos metuit Susurros.

† *Psal. 58.*
4, 5.

XIV. *Parrhasius* from the Principles of Self-Love above-mentioned, in this his Censure, calls those divine Whispers *susurros* by object- (Susurros) Fanatical ways of Speaking apt to Deceive. Should ing Fanatical one ask him, what those Fanatical ways are, or what he *ways of Speak-* means by those Words; the Question would not a little gra- ing, does not vel him. I will then answer it for him, & that more truly. *know what he*

A Word, or Speech, is the Index of the Mind, yea says. 'tis the Image thereof. Speak that I may know thee, *The origine of* said one: And Christ, *How can ye, being Evil, speak the Modes of* Good Things? For out of the abundance of the Heart, the Speech, where- Mouth Speaketh. || He that simply conceives in his Mind of Three are certain Objects, does not therefore express them in Words: the chief, and For in order to this 'tis necessary that he conceive (or the Reasons think of) them with Affection; and not only so neither, thereof. but that others also may conceive them, and receive || *Matt. 12.* them with Affection, and that they be still more and 34.

more propagated from one to another. Speech therefore, especially when 'tis Dogmatical and comes from a sound and serious Mind, infers and denotes Three Things, viz. The Conception of the Object in the Mind, Affection towards the same, and the Desire of Propagating it. But the Object when 'tis Great, the best, and the most valuable, when 'tis Stable, Internal, Spiritual and Divine; when moreover the Affection of the Mind is strongly, sincerely and deeply roused and penetrated therewith, and that even to the Spirit, and after a Divine Manner: When, finally, these Things being seen and approved of by God the searcher of Hearts, are assisted, so that the Mind thus affected, and big to bring forth Things by Words, is Influenced and Watered by God and his Graces, and in Elocution Experiences the Assistance of God; then in such a Case, *The ways of Speaking* cannot but carry in them something great and excellent, they cannot but Eccho out something Magnificent, they cannot but savour of something that's very inward, lively, sincere, divine, and altogether Incomparable; but when the Object is earthly, transitory, fading, corrupt, trifling, and for an immortal Man of little or no Moment; then indeed, seeing 'tis but reasonable that our Conceptions and Affections should be taken up with them either very little or not at all; It may likewise be reasonably expected that we should either say nothing of them, or speak but very sparingly of them, and that in terms importing but very little Esteem. But, seeing Man is at present wholly corrupt, and seeing his Understanding and his Heart and Affections are turned away from Divine Objects, and from loving them, hence it comes, that instead of conceiving and thinking of great Objects he is taken up with vain, foolish, fading Trifles, and even with nothing at all; and instead of Objects which he ought to Love and cherish in his Affections, he not only takes up with such slight and wholly inconsiderable Matters (which cannot long satisfy him) but is chiefly delighted with himself, whom out of Self-love he greatly covets to adorn, and magnify, and to have himself highly esteemed by others, not indeed by directly shewing or exposing those his shameful Affections, but by shewing how excellently well he is skilled in the Ideas, Conceptions and Knowledge of those trifling Things, which he uses all his Art to express and paint out in Words accommodated to the

the corrupt Taste, and to gratify the Ears of others. At which indeed other blind Men, who are not at all acquainted with more sublime Objects, may be, and often are astonished, so that they highly esteem the wretched Idol of such a silly Man (according to his first Intention) wondering how such an infinite variety of such mighty Trifles and Impertinencies (which out of blindness they look upon as Treasures) could be so well lodged and so orderly disposed within the narrow compals of one Man's Brain; and how he could so handsomely cloath them with Words, and thereby expose them frequently and at large to publick Sale.

We have therefor Three sorts of Speakers, who use Three sorts of Speech; although they may be all reduced to Two.

The first speak of Things Eternal, Divine, Solid, and Inward; and of such Things as relate to them; and this they do in a simple, sincere, lively and Divine manner.

The second sort speak of Things External, Perishable and Fading, and which of themselves are nothing; and this they do either sparingly, slowly and contemptuously, or they say nothing of them at all: Now these two are truly in one and the same Mind, which only considers the variety of the two Objects.

The third sort do also speak of the same External and Transitory Things; but they do it after various ways, which are more or less affected, and which are painted and disposed after an infinite Number of ways, to raise our Esteem, and according as they think they can find their own Interest, or advance their Reputation by them.

But it must be observed, that as to the Objects conceived, the Affections and Modes of Speech, the first and last of these are directly opposite to one another; for the first extolling solid Things only, speak of every thing relating to the latter as vain and unworthy of an immortal Soul. Yea, they look upon them as the Snares and Bands of Satan, where-with that Enemy of Souls endeavours to bind and hinder them from Aspiring after Heavenly Objects, for which they were made; and what these say, they do it in a moving and penetrating way, and are supported with good and solid Arguments drawn from the Scriptures and sound Reason. On the other side, the Praters of the third Class, when they see

Three sorts of Speakers; which are reduced to Two.

The true Reason why Parthasius calls the Mystical ways of speaking Fanatical.

all their Wares either torn to Pieces or despised by them, and being thereby greatly offended with them, and not finding in the Scriptures or in sound Reason any Argument or Shelter either for themselves or against them, they are forced to betake themselves to the Armory of Self-love, to Dissimulations and Frauds, and to loose Declamations and Rhetorical Flourishes, wherewith to Colour and Disguise all those sinistrous Artifices that they find themselves obliged to use against them.

And this is the Genuin Reason why *Parrhasius* (as belonging to this third Class) without giving any Reason, rails so as he does against the Mysticks (who are of the first and second Class) and against their ways of speaking, all which he Traduces as *Fanatical*: That is, he considers them as ways whereby Things Divine, Eternal and Inward are solidly, lively, sincerely and efficaciously proposed; otherwise than he and such as himself do with regard to their own silly trifling Fancies, or their Imaginary Notions in Divinity, which by the help of corrupt Reason and Criticks they Extract from the Letter of the Scripture, and which after all, are nothing but Dry, Barren and Airy Speculations; and such as have no other Reality nor Existence, but what they have in their own Corrupt Imaginations.

XV. Why
Parrhasius
Accuses those
that are pleased
with Mystical things,
of seeking to
impose upon
themselves.

XV. Again, These two sorts of speakers have each their respective Auditors, who favour and are pleas'd with them; and who are also contrary one to the other.

The first, when they see that some upon hearing their words, are converted to God and to heavenly Things, and condemn every thing else, they ascribe the Glory thereof not to themselves, but to God, and they own that their Conversion is from God, that they are touched by God (to whom they desire to offer up their Faculties to receive his Operations) and that they are therefore the Sons of God, whilst others who are affected and wrought upon by trifles and empty Words are of the World, and continue

(a) 1 Jo. 4, 5.

so. (a) *They are of the World, therefore speak they of the World, and the World beareth them. We are of God. He that knoweth God, beareth us; he that is not of God, beareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error, or DELUSION.*

On

On the other hand, the last, who are full of Self-love, esteem themselves and their Followers only, so that all the Glory of their Acquirements may be ascribed to themselves, to their own Industry, Penetration and Ingenuity; therefore they use to reckon only themselves and their Followers among the learned Men, and among the great, amazing and celestial Genius's of their Age: But if they see some others, who possibly were once either their Hearers or Companions, go over to the first, leaving and despising those amusing trifles which they formerly so much loved, yet because of their blindness they do not see the Cause of this change, viz. Those more Divine Objects of the Soul, and their inward Affections and Operations, which draw and attract the Mind to them, they cannot chuse but be astonished at such an Incident, they must despise the unknown Cause thereof, and ascribe it to a certain Simplicity of Mind, and say, That it proceeds from a facility or Propension of the Soul to deceive itself; just as Parrhasius does here in our Case, when he says, That those that suffer themselves to be led by Divine Mystical Authors to those Things which to him are Invisible, are therefore deceived by the fanatical ways or Terms of the Mysticks, because they are very forward and apt to deceive themselves; that is, because they are very willing to suffer themselves to be drawn and influenced by the efficacious Operations of a Diviner sort of Objects, which to Parrhasius, who is so blind that he can neither see nor understand them, seem to be nothing but Delusion or Deception. But this Parrhasius abhors; for to one that is guided by Self-love, it seems absurd to surrender and resign himself to those Objects, Words or Promises, which his blind Reason cannot first comprehend. In such a case he would willingly deceive himself, says he! But good Mr. Parrhasius, did you never see any Blind Men put themselves into the Hands of an Operator or Oculist, and submit to his Operations and Methods of Cure, although they never saw him, and that yet for all that they did not deceive themselves, but acted very wisely? Or did you never read in the Scriptures (a) That he that would be wise in Christ, must look upon all Self-love, or the Wisdom of the Flesh, as foolishness; yea, that he ought to be crucify'd and die to it; and that though it was gain before, yet that it ought to be cast away like Dung, that we may be

(a) 1 Cor. i, 30. & 3. 18.
Philip 3. 8,
Etc.

found in Christ, and know him and the Power of his Death and Resurrection, and that he may be made to us that Wisdom which can never deceive us?

XVI. Why
Parrhasius
ascribes to his
Adversaries
empty Imagina-
tions for
Religion?

XVI. Finally, *Parrhasius* observing well enough, that those who are affected with and addicted to Things solid and ipiritual, are not therefore stupid; but that their Mind, Understanding, Heart and Affections are really exercised and taken up in a very lively manner; but not seeing or not knowing that God is intimately present in them, working in and filling the Soul and all its Faculties with the Operations of his Love; hence he dares not indeed ascribe to them (as some have done out of Derision and by reason of their Ignorance in the Mystical Theology) a State of *Quietism* or *simple Rest*, and an absolute Privation of all Thought. Our Antagonist acknowledges that they think and conceive, and Exercise other Acts of the Mind; but according to his scoffing way, he calls them *Imaginations*, and these indeed *Empty*, or *vain*; namely, because he is wholly Ignorant of the Transcendent Reality both of the Object that fills them, and of the Internal, Spiritual and Invisible Acts of the Mind itself. And because the Mysticks esteem and recommend this inward Occupation of the Faculties of the Mind with God, and with his Operations and Love, given and kindled therein by the Holy Spirit, as the Essence and Life of True RELIGION, and as that great Commandment upon which the Law and the Prophets hang; and seeing that Occupation or Imployment of the Mind and its Faculties with God working in them, is as has been said by *Parrhasius*, ranked among *vain and Empty Imaginations*; hence it comes that he adds, that those who listen to the Mysticks, *Take up with empty Imaginations for RELIGION*.

XVII. Religi-
on as defined
or commended
by Parrhasius,
how much it
may deceive?

XVII. That we may not, after having exploded those things, remain altogether without Religion; he is very ambitious to shew us forthwith what RELIGION is, viz. *Good Manners grounded upon the Hopes of another Life proposed in the Gospel*. It would be a malicious slander, did *Parrhasius* (which I do not charge upon him) thereby intend to insinuate, that those of whom he speaks, esteemed Good Manners less than they ought: For although Manners seem to appertain more to the Externals than to the Internals of Christianity, yet because we ought to glorify God in Body and before Men, that thereby they may be

be moved to turn unto God, the Christian Religion cannot be perfect without them, and indeed *Good Manners* are of great value when they proceed from a Heart (as the Mysticks with the Scriptures teach) thirsting after God, and which is sincere and humble, and that always implores the Assistance, Strength and Wisdom of the Holy Spirit, which Desires to please God only, and proposes to itself the Glory of God alone in all Things, that so God may be glorified through us, and through others, now and for ever. But when they proceed from Self-love, which seeks only its own Praise, its own Pleasure, and its own Advantage; and from a Heart which is Proud and that trusts in itself, rejecting or deriding the inward Assistances, Light, Motion, and Government of God; then such *Good Manners*, though in a Political Sense, and according to the Rules of Honesty, they be very good, yet in the sight of God they are nothing but an Abomination; just like the *Good Manners* of the Pharisees, who gave God Thanks, that they were not (a) as other (a) Luke 18. Men, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers; That they fasted 10, &c. often, and gave Tithes of all that they had, and made long Prayers; when yet Christ affirms that by this Righteousness (b) none shall enter into the Kingdom (b) Mat. 23. of Heaven; that although they believe themselves 20. to be Righteous, and behave themselves civilly before Men, yet that (c) God knows their Hearts, and (c) Luke 18. abominates those things that Men esteem; and hence it 15. is that (d) comparing them to whitened Sepulchres, he denounces many grievous Woes against them. But according to Parrhasius's Maxim and Religion, they 27, &c. ought rather to have been praised and thought happy, forasmuch as they had *Good Manners* founded in the hopes of another Life proposed in the Psalms and other Books of the Old Testament. Who does not see that under these Words, Parrhasius, who in all his other Writings (e) does so much cry up the Socinian Probity and Sanctity, would either conceal or introduce the Pelagian Religion, which is proud and tainted with the Poyson of Self-love, and which glories in rejecting the most inward Operations of God? But how can true Sanctity dwell in a Heart, from whence the Author of Holiness, the Holy Spirit of God is banished, and which is so proud that it scoffs at all the Operations thereof, and which will nether acknowledge its own Impurity and Impotence, nor humbly

bly desire to be touched by the healing hand of God in its most Inward Parts? What also can *that other life* be to a corrupt Man, who scoffs at all Inward or Mystical Things, but every thing that's grateful and pleasant to corrupt Nature; having withal a due regard to Honesty, so that from this absurd Principle, some have almost fancied to themselves that the Life of God and of the Heavenly Host, may possibly be employed in Mathematical Contemplations, unless possibly some *Parrybassian* Criticks should rather imagine that it is taken up in publishing the *Classick* Authors with curious Notes, or in some other thing very grateful and acceptable to Men of a Critical Taste; or perchance in those Songs and Dances which Mr. *Le Clerc* has placed at one side of that lucid Globe, which in his Notes upon the New Testament he sometimes substitutes (Symbolically, as he says) for the Presence of God, and at whole (a) *Right hand* he imagines that *Christ* sits in Heaven, not knowing that in the other Life, things will not be communicated to us in *Enigma's*, but in Truth and in Reality, so that the Spirits of Just and Holy Men shall be consummated in one (b) with God, and in God himself even after that most intimate way of Union whereby the Son of God is one in and with God the Father.

(a) Vid. Not.
ad Mark 16.
9. also Mat.
13. 16. and
5. 9. John
14. 8.
(b) Vid. John
17.

The Scope of
true Religion,
and what it
requires?

(c) 1 Cor. 15.
28.

Now to this Life Eternal, namely a full and most intimate Union with God, we must be led and prepared by the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, whereby all such things as obstruct that most intimate Union in and with God, and which are the hindrances that God is not to us (c) *all in all*, must be removed; and from which likewise we must learn how and by what means we may again put ourselves into the Hands of our Creator.

But what have separated us from that Union with God, and are still hindrances to it, are Pride of Heart, and every thing that helps to cherish the same, such as our own Wisdom, our own Ratiocinations, our own Conduct, and the setting our Hearts upon Objects which are not God; our glorying in Wisdom and in the Knowledge of many Things whence we seem to be like Gods, knowing by our own Industry the difference between Good and Evil; and finally the desire and delight of Nature in Plenty of External Things, and the sweet satisfaction we take in them. But in order to promote that Divine Union,

on, we must put away and hate all these Things, and we must turn our Hearts, and all our most inward Faculties with all possible sincerity and simplicity to the Will of God alone, whereupon the healing, perfecting and uniting Operation of God will ensue.

Now that the Omnipotent God might powerfully and admirably accomplish all these Things, by removing some and promoting others; and being willing to apply the most powerful means that was possible, even that by which we were Created, he out of the infinite Abyss of his Love and Wisdom wrought and brought to Light that most stupendous Miracle, which even the Angels themselves can never sufficiently adore, the Mystery of Godliness, the Life and Power of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION; namely, the WORD of GOD, by which all things were made, which is from the beginning with God, which is God, the only begotten Son who is in the Bosom of the Father, Omnipotent, Infinite, Eternal and for ever Blessed, was MADE FLESH; who hiding his Eternal Glory from us, strip'd himself of all things and humbled himself, being made Man, the humblest of Men, and becoming a little Infant, unable either to speak or to govern himself, and committed to the Government of the Divine Wisdom which dwelt in a poor Virgin and a Carpenter; and who lived in the greatest simplicity, in denying himself, and in all sorts of Wants of worldly Wisdom, of Plenty and of Pleasures; in Contempt, in Pains of Soul and Body, in which after he would Die and be buried; arising from thence by the Power of God, he returned to a glorious Union and Life Eternal with the Father, and from him obtained and sent the Holy Spirit, that in the Power and by the Conduct thereof we also may return to the Father by that self-same way which the Son trod in before us, and has recommended to us, saying, *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no Man comes or returns to the Father but by me*; That is, none is fit and worthy to be reunited to God, unless laying aside all Malice and all Guile, all Pride, all Self-wisdom and vain Reasoning, all Self-love and every Lust of Corrupt Nature, he be born again in the Childlike Spirit of Christ, unless every one give up and resign himself to the Spirit of Christ our God, that he may be Incarnate again, as I may say, after a secondary but living and

*A Summary
Account of our
most DIVINE
RELIGION
as opposed to
the Parrhasian
Religion.*

John 1.

Philip. 2. 7.

John 14. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

Gal. 4. 19.

and real manner, in us, that *he may be formed in us*, that he may take to himself our Mind, our Faculties and all that's ours, and do and work in them (in every one according to his Capacity) all that he did and wrought in the Humanity of Christ himself: So that we may be made by him and in him as *new born Babes*, knowing nothing but to *desire and seek* continually from the Wisdom of God, *That sincere Milk of the WORD* (the quickening Power and Strength of God in Spirit and in Truth) whereby *St. John* 1. 14, *The Word made Flesh*, was nourished, *That by it* we may grow in the same word Incarnate, partaking of his Life and Spirit of most humble Examination, Simplicity, Afflictions, Infamy, Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, where finally our Heart and Conversation is with him, and from whence by the same Holy Spirit ruling then in us without any let or molestation, and working more fully all good Things in us, do thenceforward proceed all our Understanding and Knowledge, and Ability, and Government, and finally all our words tending to the Glory of the Father through Christ in the same Spirit, even until that Omnipotent Power swallow up all the remains of our Mortality into Eternal Glory. This, this is that true and most heavenly CHRISTIAN RELIGION, so much commended in the Holy Scriptures, and by those Mystical Authors whom *Parthianus* despises; and this alone is enough to shame the miserable Pride of Man's Heart, his Mad Wisdom, and the foolish Confidence of Human Reason, glorying in its own impotent Industry, Activity and Operations, whereby, being horribly imposed upon by Satan, they imagine and persuade themselves that they can *return to the Father*, to Life Eternal, and to the highest Perfection, by Study, Reasoning, Philosophy, Critick, and gathering together infinite heaps and Mountains of Ideas concerning God and Things Divine, concerning the Works of Nature and Grace, concerning the Actions and Exploits of Men, and finally concerning an infinite number of insignificant matters, as long as they have and are governed by that sort of *Good Manners* which arises from the Rules of Philosophy and common honesty, whereby their Pride and Self-love are indeed more and more nourished and supported: When yet they might have learned from the Holy Scriptures, and ought to think

think deeply of it, that these are the very Things which God hates, and that abominable Idol, which the Christian Religion undertook to Destroy, and for which, that no Flesh might Glory in itself, but that the Divine Majesty might be Glorified and Praised in and by all Things, it pleased God, as we have just now mentioned, to appoint that Religion, the only way of returning to the Father, to Life and to Eternal Perfection; which is JESUS CHRIST strip'd of every thing, abased, a Infant not using his own Reason, his own Will, not Governing, or seeking himself or his own Glory, Contemned, Patient, Dying, Rising again, and Living and Dwelling in Heaven, without whose Spirit and without participating of his several States by Faith, or by surrendering our passive Faculties to God, to be incarnated, to live, to operate and to rule in us, there is no true Religion, nor any access to God; but all are in Error and in the way of Death, and belong and go to Satan with all their Speculations, Amusements, false Sciences, Ideas, Subtilties, and Imaginary Persuasions relating to the other hoped for Life, and with all the Good Manners and superficial Virtues of their Philosophical and Rational Religion; all which without that Fund of the most Divine Christian Religion, or without striving after it in a true and lively manner, may without having already partook thereof by Faith, are at best but cold and barren Images of Virtues, craftily and induriously, often absurdly, and always without any Life, painted in the Imagination by the Superficial Faculty of Human Reason, and which consequently have no Power to make us (a) Followers of God as Dear Children; and to imitate Christ in this World, that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; and which have no Power to raise us above corrupt Nature, nor to produce any living Acts in the time of Temptation whereby to destroy the Assaults of evil Affections, and to suppress and eradicate the Dark, false and Malicious Principles of Self-love. This is what Parthasius, or he that assumes that Name, may very plainly observe in himself, who talking almost upon every occasion of Good Manners, and Brotherly Love, of Moderating the Affections, and of the Rules of Equity, Truth, and Sincerity, of abstaining from Frauds, from Envy and from Lying, and of an infinite number of other Things of a Moral Nature, which here

(a) Eph. 5.

1 John 4.

17.

here and elsewhere he talks very handsomely of; yet he no sooner engages with an Adversary in any matter relating to himself, but presently he openly violates and breaks through them all. But how can those do otherwise who rather Scoff at the Invocation of the Spirit of Jesus to illuminate and heal their inward Parts, and to work and dwell in them for ever, under the opprobrious Epithets of *Rantism*, *Mystical Phobias*, *empty Imaginations*, and *Ridiculous Spiritualities*; how can those do it, I say, who rather Scoff and Ridicule such Things, than look upon them as the Substance of Religion, by which alone we can be restored to the Image of God, and united to God himself? May it please God to Convert them, and all of us from our own evil ways to the right ways of the Spirit of our Saviour!

XVIII. Of the true and false love of our Neighbour.

XVIII. Here *Parthasius* insinuates, That those who know what the Love of our Neighbour is, will acknowledge that in my Letter to Mr. *Le Clerc* I have violated that Love, and that indeed by the *Blackest Malice*, under the mask of Religion. He that would know and judge by the Lamp of the Light of corrupt Nature and Cloudy Reason, what the Love of our Neighbour is, cannot but be very much deceived, and will take that vicious Love, which promotes our unhappiness, when 'tis grateful to our own selfish Inclinations, for the true Love of our Neighbour. Had I scorched and commended Mr. *Le Clerc* in his Errors; had I been any wise Instrumental or Contributed my assistance to spread them, this in his and *Parthasius*'s Opinion, would have shewn that I have a true Love for my Neighbour, when yet in reality I should thereby have contributed to and promoted his Misery and that of others. The Divine Light, which they deride, shews quite another thing; for, detecting the pernicious Errors of our Neighbour, it tells us that 'tis the Part of true Love to endeavour by exposing them to set him free from them. But if he will not be set at Liberty, yea, if he yet farther desire by spreading them to infect others, and thereby endanger their Salvation; The Love of our Neighbour calls upon us to admonish and warn others against those Errors, and Frauds, which some make use of in order to cover and instill their Poison into Mens Minds. Now whether my Letter to Mr. *Le Clerc* be written according to the Dictates of this Love

Love or not, I leave others, that have considered rightly of it, to judge.

XIX. *Parrhasius* in objecting against my Devotion, as if it was mixed with *Malice*, gives a fresh instance of his scoffing Temper. If he thinks that by his Jest, such as is that of an *Extatick Devotion*, he shall be able to hinder me from endeavouring in all my Writings to bring Mens Minds to God, and to Love and Worship him, he is greatly deceived. Let him be, for me, and let him continue a Scoffer, if he pleases, to the Day of Judgment, that shall give me no disturbance. They that are best acquainted with me know that I affect no shew of Devotion. But *Parrhasius* had a Mind to pronounce me guilty of a singular sort of Hypocrisy, when to his *Irony* of Devotion he joins the Accusation of the blackest *Malice*: For a great shew of Devotion joined with the blackest *Malice*, cannot but be the most execrable sort of Hypocrisy. How agreeably does *Parrhasius* act here with the *Love of his Neighbour*! How ignorant is this Innocent Man what it is to defame another, and that even in Relation to the hidden Things of the Heart, and the most inward Recesses of the Mind! but he that by the Calumnies and Reproaches that he has cast upon the most celebrated Writers of the purest Antiquity, and also upon many of a later Date, has so clearly shewn the Regard he has to the *Love of his Neighbour*, and how solicitously he has kept himself from all Suspicion of *Malice*, may by the same Right, and with the same Justice set himself up also as a Judge of other Mens Thoughts and Hearts!

What that *Malice* is whereof *Parrhasius* accuses me, he no where tells us, that so he may shew himself to be all of a piece, by accusing blindly and proving nothing. I will tell for him what it is. In this then consists my *Malice*, that when I saw that Mr. *Le Clerc* neither knew himself nor the Truth, and that he not only entertained Capital Errors himself, but was also very Ambitious to spread them in the World; and that upon shewing him the Truth he would neither leave them nor desist from propagating them; but that he rather endeavoured by all the Means and Artifices he could contrive to circumvent those who differ'd from him, or that by shewing him the weakness of his Cause endeavour to set him free from his Errors; I say, in this consists the heinousness

XIX. Of that Devotion and Malice objected by Parrhasius, &c.

ness of my Malice, because in that *Letter* I exposed his Counterfeit Picture as in a Glass or Table; and that not to himself only, but also to others; nor did I do it by the strength of my own Imagination, or in mine own Words (as *Parthasius* uses to do) but from his own Actions and Writings, having quoted the Places and Pages of his Books, and even his own very Words. And hence it comes, that he who thought he had concealed himself sufficiently under the cover of many Artifices, appears more naked to himself and others than he would, altho' it be done for the benefit of others, that they may not be deceived by him, yea and for his own good also, would he repent. But being resolved not to repent, Self-Love, unwilling to see its own Filthiness (which it Loves and is pleased with) uncovered and exposed, not only looks upon that as Hatred; but also, (because Care is taken to prevent all excuses, so that nothing can do but to acknowledge its own Filthiness, and to deprecate its Fault) Interprets it as Malice; and because the Proofs of the matter are shewn more clearly in their proper Places, that Light is to his Self-Love black Darkness, and filthy Blackness; whence he says the whole proceeds from the *Blackest Malice*.

XX. Of St. Austin's Opinion about Grace, defended by me after a Comparative manner.
* See the foregoing Letter to Mr. Le Clerc.

XX. *Parthasius* having a mind to touch upon some Particulars, but always without Proof, downright accuses me of *Insincerity*. when at the same time he gives a fresh instance of his own. As to St. Austin's Opinion about Grace, I observed Three Things, * 1. That he held the necessity of Inward, Operating and Saving Grace; which I both then did and still do approve of. 2. But that it was offer'd to some particular Persons only; and 3. That it is irresistible; which two last particulars I neither then did, nor yet do approve of. Where then have I offer'd to defend or make an *Apology* for Things for which I myself have the greatest Abhorrence, as our Author speaks? Let *Parthasius*, if he cannot deceive us, prove his Assertion. What I have done is this. After I had consider'd these two last Heads, which I really condemn as such, by way of Comparison with Mr. Le Clerc's Notion, asserting universal and resistible Grace, but such a Grace as is no Grace; a Grace which is not inward, by the working whereof our most inward Parts are healed and saved; but a superficial appearance and shadow of Grace, which being offer'd to Proud Hearts, en-

creases

creases their Pride, and is very Consistent with it: In this Case, and Comparatively speaking, I said then, and still affirm it, that St. *Austin's* Doctrine of the necessity, truth and solidity of the Grace of God working inwardly in us, altho' the Error as to the irresistibility and particularity thereof be annexed to it, is yet infinitely better and less hurtful than Mr. *Le Clerc's Pelagian*, universal and resistible Grace. For Mr. *Le Clerc's Socinian* Grace cannot subsist with Salvation, seeing it is not the inward Operation of God healing the Soul inwardly; yea, it cherishes and increases Pride; and should they say that 'tis of God, it makes God a Friend and Companion of the Proud. St. *Austin's* Doctrine retains the true Substance of salutary Grace, the Foundation of Salvation, altho' it ascribe to the same one or two Qualities which do not so well agree with it, but which however do not change the Nature thereof: They are such as are apt to raise some Difficulties only in some Subjects, and that not always neither; yea and in some Sense they are true also.

For all sensible Grace is *Irresistible* as to the sensation in the Soul, however it be not so as to the effect or certain Conversion: Then all Grace of Correspondence or mutual Concurrence is *Particular*, and is given only to those that correspond and concur with the first Grace after a proper manner. It may also happen that one thinking that he was Converted by a Particular and Irresistible Grace, may draw this good Conclusion from it; seeing the Great and Omnipotent God has vouchsafed to turn me to himself by his own efficacious and irresistible Grace, therefore I am bound above many others to Love him, and to obey him without the least resistance; all this one may really do. And to such a Man that Erroneous Defect which is mixed with his true Belief about Grace, is (by accident) very salutary and beneficial: Nor ought we to endeavour rashly to weed it out, least by plucking up the Tares added to the Good Seed, the Good Seed of Love and Obedience which has so close a Coherence with them, be also rooted up and destroyed. We must rather wait until Love and Obedience grow up in such a Person to Maturity; and then God will communicate new Light, which alone will dissipate and destroy whatever was Imperfect in him before. But in Mr. *Le Clerc's Pelagian* Grace there is no solid Good; we can hope for no good fruit from thence,

In what Sense
the Divine
Grace may be
said to be ir-
resistible and
particular: In
an Erroneous
Sense it may by
accident do
Good. But
Mr. Le Clerc's
Grace cannot.

thence, neither of its own producing, nor by accident: For it is the Rejection of the Divine Operation working out our Salvation, and the Assertion only of some external Appearances, whereby, rejecting the Marrow and the Life, they support the Pride of the Heart, and consequently hurry the Soul to Perdition.

XXI. Of the Objection of Hatred.

* See the General Considerations from §. 10 to 16. Also the Divine Oeconomy, vol. v. ch. i.

XXII. Of St. Austin's Opinion of Constraint even by Punishments. That he does not treat there of matters of Faith; but of Externals and Matters of Discipline.

XXI. 'Tis not Mr. *Le Clerc's* Person, as *Parrhasius* falsely imagines, but his pernicious Errors, and the Artifices which he uses in proposing and spreading them, that I hate, and would have all Men hate them still; especially the *Pelagian* Rejection and Contempt of the Grace of God; which is an Error they ought to abhor as much as Hell itself: and he that would know what urgent and weighty Reasons I have for this most just desire, may find them at large * elsewhere. But those that have established Self-Love for a Rule, and whose Pride is founded in the Power and Strength of Corrupt Reason, think that to hate their Persons and to hate their Errors is the same Thing; for their own Errors, and their own Reason they Love as they do themselves.

XXII. Here again *Parrhasius* after his own way and in his own Words perverts what I blamed Mr. *Le Clerc* for in the foregoing Letter, with Reference to another Charge against St. *Austin*. I observed with some great Men, that in the Case of the *Donatists*, and even in St. *Austin's* Letter to *Vincentius* about it, he did not treat of matters of Faith, or of any Dogmatical Articles of Faith, which one part would have compelled the other to believe; but only of External Matters relating to Ecclesiastical Discipline and Policy, as to which if any difference about the Truth of some Things did arise, it was wholly founded in a Dispute about a matter of Discipline. The *Donatists* appealed to the Emperor, the Emperor refer'd it to the Bishops, and they again and again to him, whether *Cecilianus*, Bishop Elect of *Carthage*, was Criminal; and afterwards whether they that had elected him were not so too? In which Dispute, they don't meddle with Orthodoxy or Heresy. For both sides being often heard, the accused are declared Innocent, and *Cecilianus* the lawful Bishop, to whom and to his Successors, they refuse that External Obedience and Ecclesiastical Submission which was due to their Pastors, and which they were adjudged to give even by the Emperor's Command; and therefore they set

up

up a Refractory Assembly or Schism against the Peace of the Church, and against that Obedience enjoined by the Civil Powers. Then they were divided into two Parties among themselves; one, who were afterwards called *Circumcelliones*, being agitated with strange Fury, raised violent Seditions, betook themselves to force, and even committed many cruel Murders; the other was more quiet, but yet refused to submit to the Emperor's Decree. New Laws were made against those in order to enquire into their Crimes, and to punish them as they deserved: And here St. *Austin* did shew himself a most ardent Intercessor and Advocate for them, as his Letters bear Witness, and as all acknowledge to his Honour, even *Grotius* himself, with *Erasmus* and other Learned Men. Against those who were only Refractory, it was ordained that they should return to Peace, and to Unity, and to all due Obedience, upon Penalty of forfeiting their Estates: But of this they complained thus: *That none ought to be compelled to Justice*; (they are *Vincentius's* own Words,) *none ought to be forced to UNITY*. This St. *Austin* denied, and maintained that those (Refractory Persons) might, by such Laws made by the Civil Powers, be justly compelled to Peace and Unity, and to a due Obedience and Discipline for the Tranquility of the Church; tho' he had been of another Opinion before. Nor does he ascribe any other Heresy to them, either here or in his * Treatise of Heresies, but that for Crimes which * chap. 69. they had alledged, but had not proved against *Cecilianus*, they disturbed the External Peace of the Church: Nor did they complain of any Doctrines or Articles of Faith being imposed upon them. And I challenge Mr. *Le Clerc* with all his Critical Subtily, to find out or discover any Thing more than this, as to the substance of the matter.

For, if afterwards any Controversies arose in the Church, whether it was Corrupt and had fallen away, by Communicating with those whom the *Donatists* accused as Criminals, these were only pretences for their Rebellion, which was only grounded or engrafted upon the *Cecilian* Quarrel. And tho' St. *Austin* sometimes speaks of Compulsion to embrace the Truth, or to forsake Error; that Truth is only the Truth of the Cause or Fact decided; that is, that it is true, that *Cecilianus* and his Friends, namely, the Church, were not Criminals and Traytors, but truly Innocent: And then

*In what Sense
here the Words
Truth and
Error, &c.
must be taken.*

then that the *Donatists*, who had appealed to the Emperors Decision, ought to acknowledge it as *true* and *just*, at least by an outward Submission, and not any more disturb the External Order of the Church; but rather own their *Error*, and the *False* Opinion they had of *Cecilianus*, and relinquish them; or at least that they should behave themselves so outwardly, for the Preservation of Discipline and Good Order, as if they had acknowledged and relinquished them: Which indeed is no more than what is very justly required in all Matters Cognizable before Civil Courts of Judicature, and which every one is bound to comply with, however he may think himself to be unjustly cast. All then that *St. Austin* maintains as to this matter of Compulsion and Punishments, and which he defends *from the Event*, is this: That these Punishments, and this Compulsion, are often a means of bringing Refractory Persons to themselves, and of making them see and acknowledge their Error, that they themselves were in the Fault, and that those whom they blamed, are Innocent; and that therefore Constraint and Punishments do help to make them acknowledge the *Truth* of such Innocence.

Mr. Le Clerc's
Absurd, Critical Interpretation of St. Austin's Letter.
* *Defens. de Sentim. p. 367.*
† *Ibid. p. 365, 366.*

What then does Mr. *Le Clerc's* Critics, that Principal, if not the only Key of all true Interpretations, without which 'twould be a Crime to presume to interpret any Thing, what then, I say, does Mr. *Le Clerc's* Critics endeavour to charge against *St. Austin*? First, he says, * *That in St. Austin's Letter to Vincentius, there is an Apology for that abominable Doctrine, viz. † That 'tis Lawful to force Mens Consciences, and to Persecute for Religion.* But here if by the Phrase *to Persecute for Religion, or to force Consciences*, Mr. *Le Clerc* means a Persecution and Compulsion, whereby Refractory Persons are by the Authority of the Magistrate compelled to be Peaceable and Quiet, and to observe good Order and Discipline towards their Neighbours, and those that are set over them, as it ought to be here taken, it is nothing but a Ridiculous Censure, unless we may call it Slandrous too, for calling that *an abominable Doctrine*, or that says it is to *force Consciences, and to Persecute for Religion*: And I am convinced that the Remonstrants themselves, if in the Synod of *Dort* there had been no mention made of the Doctrine of the Five Articles, if the whole Question had turned upon this, whether any Pastor or Professor should be declared Guilty or Innocent; and being declared Innocent by the Synod,

and

and even by the Civil Magistrate himself, whether the Remonstrants ought to have acquiesced in such a Judgment, or whether or no if upon such an account a Schism had been made, they might not have been compelled to preserve the Peace and Unity of the Church; I am convinced, I say, that in such a Case they would all unanimously have agreed to the Opinion which countenances Unity, and therefore would have readily granted, that those that continue Obdurate and Refractory, might be by the Magistrate compelled, even by Punishments, to observe Unity; and they would have Laughed had any of their Number started this Objection of Mr. Le Clerc, that this is *to force Consciences and to Persecute for Religion*. Let Mr. Le Clerc try the Experiment, and ask them, whether or no the Troubles, or if he pleases, the Persecution and Compulsion of Grotius and the first Remonstrants had not been Just and Lawful, if the Synod and Magistrates had only required this of them. To recognize and acknowledge Gomarus or any of that Party to be not a Criminal, but a lawful Pastor or Professor of Leyden; that so they might not upon such a weak pretence make a Schism in the Church, nor condemn all the Reformed Church, as if it was not a true Church; which yet they obstinately refused to comply with? Let Mr. Le Clerc, I say, make this Trial, and he will quickly see, or be informed, that even his own Party, under Parallel Circumstances, would have been of the same Opinion with St. Austin.

But because Mr. Le Clerc would expose St. Austin to the Envy and Hatred of the World, that so the same might reflect and fall back again from him upon his Anti-Pelagian Doctrine concerning the necessity of inward Grace; it was necessary in order to this to invent and charge some very wicked and odious Things upon him. He therefore Taxes him with this, that that Opinion of his concerning Compulsion and Punishments, regards Matters of Faith, and Masters Dogmatical, as if he justified the using force in order to propagate Particular * Doctrines and Opinions. Which how false it is, is evident even from the Nature of the Subject that was in Question, or even from those † Examples which Mr. Le Clerc quotes from St. Austin in favour of his own Opinion, viz. *The Laws made against the Pagan Sacrifices; Christ's whipping the Jews; and the Apostles delivering Men over to Satan*; in which tis as clear as

He Taxes St. Austin with Falsities, and from them draws falser Conclusions.

* Defens. de Sentim. p. 367.

† Defens. de Sentim. p. 367, 368, 369.

the Snn that these Things were not done with design to compel Men to believe any *Doctrines*; for those Laws do not Ordain or Command the Gentiles to change their Idolatrous Opinions for Christian Opinions; nor did *Christ* whip the *Jews* in order to compel them to believe that he was the *Messias*: Nor did the Apostles deliver some over to Satan, that by that means they might be compelled to embrace the Christian Faith. But in all these Cases, what is proposed is only to restrain and bring into order some External and Publick Acts, which were Repugnant either to those Principles which they admitted and approved of themselves, or to the Decency of the External Worship, or to the Dictates of unprejudiced Nature, and to Vertue and Probity. True it is, I do not take upon me to defend all St. *Austin's* Examples and Arguments, as if they were always pertinent and suitable to the Subject; but 'tis sufficient to defend and hold the sum and substance of the Matter, which comes all to this, That the Dispute with him was not about *Doctrines* and Opinions; but only about some External and Publick Acts.

So that Mr. *Le Clerc* with all his Critics is infinitely mistaken, when after Taxing St. *Austin* with an Opinion which he never held, he endeavours, and that very maliciously, to charge that venerable Father, and others of his Spirit, with a more than Diabolical Malice, as * *If they took Pleasure in bringing Damnation upon some Men, by inflicting capital Punishments upon them for OPINIONS deserving Damnation, when they are in a state of Damnation at the time that they are put to Death.* Observe I pray, into what extravagances the sacred choler, shall I say, or Fury of such Critics betrays them! Nor is this enough; St. *Austin's* Doctrine, if we will believe him, even subverts and destroys the Publick Tranquility and Security: † *From St. Austin's Principles, says he, there will flow these very pernicious Consequences; that they give a RIGHT to any one that's more powerful (or stronger) to persecute others; for EVERY ONE that's persuaded of the TRUTH of his own OPINIONS, and that others are in an ERROR, will from thence be bound in CONSCIENCE to persecute them, that so he may reclaim them from their Error.* In this consequence of this new Critic, there are two or three Things falsely supposed: First, that the dispute here is about Faith, about Opinions and Errors of the Mind, which is the Foundation of all the Critics, Falsities: Secondly,

* *Clerc's* Defens. de Sentim. p. 369, 370.

† *Idem* ibid. p. 370.

ly, That St. *Austin* and his Followers held Principles, from which it follows, that the right of acting by force belongs or is extended to every one; and, thirdly, that this Right is founded in Conscience. But 'tis most evident, that 'twas never said nor allowed of in this matter, that every one might use Force and Punishments against those Refractory Persons; much less that he might do it as from a Motive of Conscience: But those Legal compulsive Punishments against those Refractory Men were committed only to certain Persons delegated by the Supreme Power for that purpose, who were obliged to inflict them, not according to the Instinct of their own Conscience, or as they thought Good, but according to a Law made, and as the Tenor of the Publick Edict directed, as any Body may at first sight observe without the Assistance of any Artificial Criticks. Wherein then has St. *Austin* offended so much, that he should be so falsely and so basely exposed by a Critick to the Horror and Execration of all Men? In this only. That Holy Prelate was not a *Pelagian*; but was infinitely averse to all the *Pelagian* and *Nocinian* Principles. Therefore all the Arts and Subtilties of the *Pelagian* Criticks must be sought to and made use of in order to Blacken and Discredit his Authority.

23. But however, Why do we hear Mr. *Poivet* (23.) Of so long upon this Subject, who, if we may believe *Parrhasius*'s *Parrhasius*, is not capable of Understanding any thing of insulting Re- the matter? Mr. *Poivet*, says he, ought not to presume flexion on Mr. to speak of such Things as he does not understand. But *Poivet*, That why don't he understand any of St. *Austin*'s Letters to he ought not *Vincentius*? because he is not skilled in Criticks: to pretend to He will not study Criticks: Yea, he even despises that understand Art, or at least he pretends that he despises it. This St. *Austin*'s is the very thing I have * elsewhere observed, that meaning; be- these Medlers do with much labour, and as if they cause he is had some mighty worthy Business in Hand, reduce ignorant of such Things into Arts and Systems, which otherwise Criticks. every Man of common Sense has a right to, so that * De Eru- by tacking a multitude of other smaller, and often- dit. Lib. 2. times very impertinent Things to them, they create § 54. N. 12, the Appearance of a new Art, known forsooth and and Lib. 3. peculiar to themselves only, that so afterwards § 63. when they are drove to any straits, they may for an evasion pretend, that such a matter, and the Under- standing thereof, belongs to that Art of theirs, which

which is peculiar to themselves and their Followers, and that therefore all the rest that are ignorant of, or that despise the same, ought not to be regarded. That is, a Man of good plain Sense cannot discern whether *Partholus* puts Chaff or Corn upon him, because he knows not how to discern upon them Critically! None therefore before this blessed System of Mr. Le Clerc's Critical Art, was fit to understand these words of St. *Austin* to *Vincentius*, which contain the whole matter: *We blame them for this; because of their own head they accused Cecilianus to the Emperor, whereas they ought first to have convicted him before his Colleagues: That when the Emperor acted much more regularly, in remitting the Cause of the Bishops brought before him, to Bishops themselves; they refused to submit to their Decision and to be at PEACE with their Brethren; but also accused those Bishops who were appointed their Judges, before an earthly King. Again, they appealed from another Episcopal Judgment to the same Emperor; and even when he interposed and gave JUDGMENT against them, they refused to submit to the Truth, and to return to Peace.*

For that Emperor (*Constantine*) first, ordained in this Cause, that those that were convicted, and that **OBSTINATELY RESISTED UNITY**, should forfeit their Estates. But now supposing that your Ancestors upon their complaints had gained their Cause, and that the Emperor had made such a Decree against the Communion of *Cecilianus*, would you think you deserved the Name of the Guardians of the Church, and the Maintainers of its **PEACE and UNITY**, when at the same time you should blame the legal Proceedings against those, who of their own head accused others, and yet could prove nothing, and who though they were offered it, yet would not return to the Bosom of **PEACE**; and all this under pretence, that none ought to be forced to **UNITY**; and that we ought not to render evil for evil. Again, none could Understand the meaning of these words of St. *Austin* in his Letter by way of Answer to *Boniface*, who desired to know, whether the *Donatists* erred in point of Doctrine, as did the *Arians*? The *Donatists* acknowledge one substance of the Trinity——They speak wholly as the *Catholick Church* believes; nor do they differ about that at all; but they unhappily wrangle about **COMMUNION ONLY**; and through the perverseness of their Error they are guilty of **Rebellious ENMITIES** against the **UNITY**

UNITY of Christ——They acknowledge with us, Christ as he is in the Scriptures——But they prefer their own Disputes (concerning the Unity and Peace of the Church) to the Divine Testimonies, because that upon the Account of Ceciliamus, sometime Bishop of Carthage, against whom they objected CRIMES which they never could nor can prove, they DIVIDED themselves from the Catholick Church, that is, from the UNITY of all Nations. Are not these, and the like Passages in those Letters, most profound Enigma's, and such as not I only, but even all those who are not yet versed in Mr. Le Clerc's and Parrhasius's Criticks, that is almost all the Divines, Civilians, Physicians, Philosophers and other Learned Men of the World cannot penetrate into, and that therefore neither they nor Mr. Poirer ought to presume to speak of such things as they do not understand? Who would not be ashamed thus to insult almost all the learned World with so little Modesty, out of a most vain Ostentation of his own Art and Skill, and that by so absurd and ridiculous a Specimen thereof? Thus 'twould be Arrogance in any one that has not the same skill in Criticks as Mr. Le Clerc and Parrhasius, to pretend to meddle (as he says) in the Business of interpreting the above-mentioned Passages, and saying, that they import no more than this, "That a certain matter of Fact, which regarded the Peace of the Church, was decided even at the instances of the Accusers, by the Imperial Authority: That he first enjoined them to be Peaceable, and to live in Unity: That the Party that gained the Cause offered Peace to their Accusers: That the Accusers were Refractory: And that therefore the Emperors, as being their Judges, ordered them, if they refused to submit and live in Peace, to be punished." But, how necessary is it to understand Criticks! Let such a rash Interpretation, which would presume to appear without Parrhasius's Critical Art, be cancelled; and by the help of this new Guide, which alone has Eyes to conduct us, in the room thereof let this other be substituted: viz. "That those words signify that the Controversy was about matters of Faith and Doctrine, and about Dogmatical Articles and Opinions; and that 'twas ordained by an Imperial Decree, and approved of by St. Austin, that every one is bound in Conscience

" to persecute all the rest that differ from him in
 " any Opinion or Doctrine.

But what if *Poires* be not the only one that puts that Sense and Construction which he has given, upon *St. Austin's* Words and Discourse; but that besides the Natural import of the Discourse, and the History of the Fact, he have also others of the same Mind with him, and whom *Mr. Le Clerc* himself often commends, and who, by his own Confession, are Men of great Eminence and Learning? In my Letter to *Mr. Le Clerc* I quoted *Erasmus* and *Mr. Claude*, a Famous French Protestant Divine, and to these I will now add two famous *Leyden* Divines, *D. D. Spanhemius* and *Wirsus*; and if *Mr. Le Clerc* thinks fit to accuse either of them of being ignorant of Criticks, or of presuming to meddle in things which they did not understand, Let him see to it. Let us hear the Celebrated *Spanhemius*: He in his Christian History (*Secul. V.*) shewing that the Papists do very unjustly urge *St. Austin's* Opinion in relation to the *Donatists*, in order to justify their Practice of Oppressing and using Violence with Protestants, says,

(a) In the
 first Tome of
 his Works,
 p. 1020.

(a) The Donatists were to be kept under by the Laws as SEDITIOUS Persons; For they did not separate upon the Account of ANY ARTICLE of FAITH, nor did they alledge that any New Article had been introduced, which the Catholicks maintained, but would not adhere to what was asserted — being also often invizied by the Indulgence of the Emperor, — after they had of their own accord obstinately withdrawn themselves without any FUNDAMENTAL Cause. Moreover they gave themselves up to cruel VIOLENCE. And the Learned *Wirsus*, in his Sacred Miscellanies, where he gives a short and Succinct Account of that long and Intricate History of the Donatists, comprizes the Substance of the whole matter in these Words: (a) The Donatists with the Catholicks in Africa, professed the SAME FAITH, they had the SAME WORSHIP of God, they used the same Sacraments, and Ceremonies, nor was there ANY CONTROVERSY among them upon THAT ACCOUNT. They ONLY differed about the Ordination of *Cecilianus*, which they pretended was not performed in the way and order it ought to have been, and that upon that Account the whole African Church was so polluted by the Communication of the Crime, that it lost the Privileges and Character of

(a) Misc.
 Tom. 1. p.
 817, &c.

a Christian Church; and not only the African Church, but even the other Churches beyond Sea that communicated with her.—This was the **SOLE CAUSE** which they alledged for their Separation. After these Reasons, after these Witnesses, after the Fact which speaks for itself, I ingeniously confess that *Poirer*, who does not at all make use of Mr. *Le Clerc*'s most singular Art, dares not presume to put that Interpretation, which he does, upon St. *Austin*'s Words, as if they justified or allowed of Persecution for matters of Faith and Opinion: Yea, *Poirer* little regards, but rather greatly despises, and even abhors such sort of Criticks, which from the Text itself of Books can draw such Interpretations, as enervate, break and destroy the force and Substance of what they are designed to teach us, and substitute the contrary wholly in their room. To cultivate such a horrid Art, and to apply it to the Holy Scriptures which deserve all possible Veneration, and so by that means to Deface and Destroy the adorable Mysteries of God, with their true Design and meaning, seems to me to be a Calamity that can never be enough lamented, and therefore only fit to be reserved for the wicked Men of the last times.

24. Nor yet for all this would I be thought to despise the true Principles and Grounds of Interpretation, nor yet Criticism itself, if taken in a right Sense, and as restrained within due Bounds. For that I esteem as much as is needful, and according as it deserves: Nor am I altogether Ignorant what it is, or how it is distinguished from *Parrhasius*'s false Criticks: Which I shall now be willing to shew a little more at large, in hopes it may be of use to some; or that *Parrhasius* himself, who boasts and prides himself in his vain Pretensions of knowing more than all the World besides, may thereby be made a little more modest.

I will therefore shew first, even from Mr. *Le Clerc* himself, That *Parrhasius* ought not to have denied me the true Critical Principles of Interpretation, much less to upbraid me that they were wanting in the Interpretation of one easy Letter. Then I will prove that even Mr. *Le Clerc*'s Criticks; which *Parrhasius* boasts so much of, is false even in the very Definition that he has given himself; and lastly, I will propose some more solid Principles relating to true and false Criticism, and such as Mr. *Le Clerc* and

(24.) Of the Contempt of Criticism objected against me.

I do not absolutely despise it.

and *Parrhasius* are yet ignorant in or have not thought of; from all which it will appear, what his Criticks are at the Bottom; and finally what that is which deserves to be esteemed; and on the contrary what ought to be despised, and wholly rejected as Insignificant and Spurious.

The FIRST.
Mr. Le Clerc
contradicts
Parrhasius's
insulting Re-
flexion upon
me.

(a) Bibl.
Choisie, Tom.
IV. p. 145.

As to the first, I shall use Mr. Le Clerc's own Words in the IXth Tome of his *Bibliothèque*, where he says, (a) *The general and infallible Principles of true Criticism, or of the Art of Understanding the Ancients, and of drawing out their Consequences, are comprehended in Logick.* But *Poiret* may, as he thinks, without any *Artogance* pretend to say that he understands *Logick* as well as *Parrhasius*, and that he could instruct some therein before even *Parrhasius* could Interpret, or possibly Read a *Latin Discourse*. If therefore the foresaid words of Mr. Le Clerc be true, and if *Parrhasius* be of the same Mind, he has no reason to say that I am Ignorant of the General and more certain (I choose to say rather than *Infallible*) Principles of true Criticism, or of the Art of Understanding the Ancients, and of drawing Consequences from their Words. Which directly contradicts that Insolent and Unbecoming Reflexion in the *Parrhasian* Censure.

The SECOND.
The Examination
of Mr.
Le Clerc's
Definition of
CRITICISM,
wherein four
or five blunders
are shewn.

(a) *Art. Crit.*
Vol. I. p. 1.

But possibly *Parrhasius* depends upon that Definition of Criticism which Mr. Le Clerc gives in the beginning of his Volumes about the *Critical Art*, according to which he will easily exclude very many, and me among the rest, from being yet matters of the true Principles of Interpretation. But if it was so, I would appeal from that Definition, to the above quoted words of Mr. Le Clerc, which if true, as they are, it must needs be that a Definition from which the contrary would follow, must be false in some thing. But what is that Definition? (a) *CRITICISM*, says he, *Is the Art of Understanding Ancient Writings, whether in Verse or Prose; and of knowing which of them are Genuine, and which Spurious.*

And indeed this Definition does not labour under one falsity only. First, If among the *WRITINGS* of the *ANCIENTS*, of whom he speaks here, he comprehend those that are Divinely Inspired; 'tis false that they can be rightly understood by the help of Criticks, or by any Art of human Reason, not to say of Reason as it is corrupted. Every Inspired Writer may truly say of his Writings, that in order

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order to understand that which he Delivers, *There is no need of that Art; but of Faith and Silence*, (or of a believing and silent Heart and Understanding, and Internal and silent Prayer.) Surely, 'tis not to be imagined that those Sacred Writers should have left us in the dark as to that principal and important Question about the Understanding of their Writings. But what do they teach us as to that matter? In a Thousand places they refer us to Divine Illumination, to the Gift of the Spirit of Wisdom, to God's opening our Eyes, to Revelation, to the inward Uction and Instruction of God's Spirit, all which must be sought and obtained of God by offering up to him continual Prayers and Intercessions in Faith; by humbly opening our Hearts, and submitting our Understanding to him; by acknowledging our own Blindness, Darkness and Impotence; and finally, by imploring his gracious Illumination and Assistance; and by faithfully practising what by his Gift we know already. Let Mr. *Le Clerc* shew me in what place of the Holy Scriptures this Insignificant Art of his is recommended as necessary to the Understanding those Sacred Books, and that but so much as once, tho' he every where praises it a Thousand and a Thousand times; yea, does not the Spirit of God in express Terms, and in effect more than once condemn the same in the Scribes and Jewish Doctors, and in the Wise Men of the World; and do not most complain that the use thereof throughout all Mr. *Le Clerc's* Writings tend rather to enervate and subvert the Sense, than to give a true Interpretation of the Scriptures.

Secondly, If by the *Writings of the Ancients*, the Definition mean Books not indeed Inspired by God in so singular a manner, but written and proceeding from a good, pious and Holy Will, such as are many Spiritual Books treating of Sacred and Divine matters; it is likewise false that the understanding the Substance of them depends upon Criticism, or can be obtained by it: For that depends upon the Integrity of the Heart touched by God, joined with common Sense, and the Vulgar Knowledge of the Language, which either the Author or a faithful Translator has made use of. And this is so true, that as to the understanding even the Scripture itself, as to the Substance, and so far as is necessary to Salvation, Mr. *Le Clerc* owns (a) that it may be understood

See 1 Cor. 2.
v. 11—16.

(a) Sentiments, Let. 3.

derstood without discussing or meddling with Critical Difficulties; and that it is so clearly delivered in the Sacred Books, that it cannot well be mistaken, even by the most illiterate. Now from this Observation it follows, That the solid Sense and true meaning of any Book that Treats of Pious and Divine Subjects, and consequently that those which St. *Austin* wrote in the Spirit of Humility, of Love and of the Grace of God, may be better understood by one of a good Disposition, and that seeks after Humility, Charity and Grace, than by the most subtle ill-natured Critick, that's an Enemy to the Grace of God, to Humility, and to St. *Austin's* other Vertues and good Dispositions, and who consequently is altogether blind as to the Spiritual Sense and Precepts expressed in St. *Austin's* Words. As to prophane Writings, Common Sense with a tolerable Knowledge of the Language that they are written in, is in the main, and as to the Substance all that is necessary to the Understanding of them, as is evident from a Thousand Instances: And this should rather be refer'd to Grammar, and also to Logick, where it treats of this Interpretation, than to Criticism.

By this means, the special Object and proper matter of Criticism (and this is the Third defect in the Definition, which is a Defect of Preremission) is nothing but *some Accidents not so essential* to the Substance of the Things Described in Words, wherein either for the sake of Pleasure, or possibly upon the Account of some accessory Advantage, such Things are more particularly discussed as regard some smaller Circumstances relating either to the Times or Places, or some particular Modes of Speech, and the like; and this should have been expressed in the Definition, that so instead of Trifles we might not look for Treasures (which it really has not) from Criticism.

Fourthly, When the Definition adds that by Criticism we distinguish *what Writings are Genuine, and what Spurious*, if he means this of such Writings as proceed from the Spirit of God, he deceives us again. This is solidly and fully done by the inward Light and Testimony of God and those that Love him. That *Voice, those Words* that are truly of God, *Those Sheep* know to be his, who are inwardly struck, affected and taught by the same in their Hearts, Criticism but a few Years ago discover'd to Mr. Le

Clerc

John 10. v.
4. 5. 14.

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Clerc that the *Pentateuch* is not the Genuine Work of *Moses*; the same Art (if not joined with some Oeconomy) afterwards shew'd him the quite contrary. And the very same Art does still dictate to him (or to the Author of the (a) *Epistles of Inspiration*) that the Books of *Job*, the *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, the *Song of Songs*, and some Places in the *Psalms* are not fit to be reckoned among the Number of the Genuine Works of the Spirit of God. In which matter surely he plainly discovers the blindness of his own Art, and more and more betrays the manifest Falsity of this his Definition with regard to Divine Objects.

(a) In the Book, *Sentimens des Theolog. de Holl. Epist.* 11. & 12.

Fifthly, This Clause in the Definition of Criticism, relating to Genuine and Spurious Writings, seems to be added on purpose to lead us into a Noose; viz. That, seeing there are few among the Learned that take upon them to discuss those Things of themselves, our Criticks, when they see themselves reduced to Difficulties, and Non-plus'd about the substantial meaning of the Scriptures or any other Authors, may extricate themselves from them by objecting to their Adversaries, That they, because they have not applied themselves to learn the Art of discerning Genuine Writings from those that are Spurious, are Ignorant of Criticism, and therefore are not duly qualified to give the Sense of Authors.

For these Reasons it had been better first of all to distinguish CRITICISM, taken in a larger Sense, into Three Parts or Species; into Criticism about the Sense, into Criticism about the Words; and into Criticism about the Books themselves; and to allow the first to most, if not to all the Learned; to restrain the Second to a smaller Number, called *Philologues*; and the Third to a very few.

And by this means there had been no room left childishly to Insult those of the First sort, because they are not so well skilled in what belongs to the Second and Third Species, as those that call themselves Universal Criticks are, who yet are sometimes very Ignorant of what relates to themselves, as may be seen in Mr. Le Clerc himself, who having lately, (Anno 1700) undertaken to Revise and Publish the Works of the Apostolical Fathers, instead of the Genuine Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans, suffered, to the great detriment of the Work, a Spurious one to be Reprinted, because he knew not, though he be so great

great a Master in all sorts of Critical Learning, that more than Ten Years before (1689) Father *Ruinart* had published it at *Paris* in his Book Entituled *Acta Martyrum sincera & Selecta*, Page 695, &c. Together with the Genuine Acts of *Ignatius* in Greek, whence it might have been expected that such a Critick, and the Overseer of so great a Work, would have taken it and inserted it into his New Edition, which by the Addition of such a rare Jewel would have much recommended it before the first Edition. I know that he somewhere Excuses this Omission, by saying, That Father *Ruinart*'s Book was not to be met with in these Parts: But he had dealt more Ingenuously had he plainly owned that he had neither heard of the Book, nor knew any thing of the Edition of that Genuine Letter in it: For from the Edition of *Lactantius* of the Deaths of the Persecutors, at *Utrecht*, Anno 1692, it appeared publicly that that Book was in the hands of the Editors of *Lactantius*, to which they added all Father *Ruinart*'s Preface on Mr. *Dodwel*, taken from thence. But how could this Book, called *The Genuine Acts of the Martyrs*, be so scarce in these Parts, when even I, who keep not a Critical Library, could have shewn it to any body that desired it, the First or Second Year after it was published, among my little Collection. After such an Error, might it not reasonably be expected that Mr. *Le Clerc* should bear more easily with the like or lesser Errors of others, and that he should not so roughly complain of those of *Berlin*, for that in their Edition of *Clement Alexandrinus*, they omitted a Tract of his, Entituled, *Quis Dives Salvetur*, which had been published but Five Years before at *Oxford*, when yet a Genuine Epistle of *Ignatius* had been published full Eleven Years before his Edition of the Apostolical Fathers came out, and whereof mention had undoubtedly been made in some of the publick Journals?

The THIRD.
Of Criticism,
some Things
Remarkable.
(a) De Eru-
dit. Lib. ii.
§. 34, &c.
Lib. iii. §.

And thus *Parrhasius* may see what I have to object against Mr. *Le Clerc*'s Definition of Criticism.

Let him now come on, if he pleases, and see, whether (a) besides what I have elsewhere mentioned) I cannot suggest some things of more solid use, which possibly he has not so much consider'd, or is not so well acquainted with, and which will be of more general use to every one, with relation to Criticism.

First,

First, I distinguish CRITICISM into two Sorts, viz. *Clear-sighted* and *Blind*.

I call that *Clear-sighted* Criticism, when the real Faculties of the Critick, which correspond to the Things or Objects of which he Treats, are so moved and touched with the more essential Affections of Things described in Books, that there remain only in the Things themselves, or in the External Modes and Words wherein they are express'd, some smaller and accessory matters, which are not so well apprehended, and which therefore should afterwards be, by the Sagacity of the Active Intellect, sought out and explained more at large; and in this indeed the Nature and Business of Real Criticism properly consists.

*Clear sighted
Criticism
what?*

I call that *Blind* Criticism, when the Real Faculties of the Critick, which correspond to the Things or Objects in Question, are not moved, as I may say, nor touched or affected by the Lively and Principal Vertues (or Emanations) of the Objects themselves: So that the Critick has no experience of them, nor ever felt them in a lively manner himself: But hearing however a great many Words and Discourses about them, and having a Mind to pass his Judgment upon them, he boldly undertakes to perform every thing by the Luxuriancy of his Imagination and active Intellect: He denies those Vertues and Truths which flow from those most Real Objects, and from their Affections and Operations, and the Sensations which they produce, because he never felt any of them; he looks upon them as Chimera's, and in their room sets up any absurd and monstrous Fancy of his own; he dwells wholly upon matters of the smallest Consequence, upon the nicety of Words, and every other little Circumstance, as if the Itself and weight of Things lay wholly in them; finally, he frames and makes to himself confused Structures of all sorts, which though he does but handle and feel them in the Dark, yet so long as he does not see the True and Solid Objects themselves, he admires the Ingenuity of his own Contrivances, and does what he can to make others that are blind like himself, to admire them too.

*Blind Criticism
what?*

In order to explain and shew the use of this Distinction more clearly, we must know, that there are Two sorts of Objects, viz. Spiritual, Internal and Divine Objects, with their Properties and Qualities,

*A more particular
Explanation of this
Distinction.*

and

*Clear-sighted
(or Real) Cri-
ticism Illu-
strated by a
Similitude
taken from
Spiritual Ob-
jects.*

and the Operations flowing from them; and Corpo-
real, External and Physical Objects, with their Pro-
perties and Powers, and the Operations and Radiati-
ons or Tendencies of these again to communicate
themselves by lively Impressions.

Now when a Man's Spiritual, Internal and Divine
Faculties, which are made for Divine, Internal and
Spiritual Objects, and their Impressions, have recei-
ved in them by this or that way, more or less, the
Action and Operation of those Objects, and of their
Properties and Qualities, and are affected with them;
and when afterwards such a Man either hears the
Discourses of others, or reads Books that Treat of
Spiritual and Divine Subjects; then presently, if he
be but Master of the Language wherein they are
spoken or written, he understands the Substance and
Marrow of them, and the main scope and end that
they drive at; and that even although those should
express themselves less accurately and with less Pro-
prietty, and sometimes in an imperfect and defective
manner, as it often happens among those who are
more solicitous about Things than Words, and who
know that they speak to such as are either acquainted
already with what they Treat of, or know by Ex-
perience how they may be so; and who can easily
accommodate their own Understanding to the Under-
standing and Sence of the Speaker or Writer. And
indeed among such, even a Word or Two, though
not altogether so proper, suffices to make them un-
derstand one another very well, and to conceive the
whole Series of a matter (which if they were of
another Disposition, no Words, no Criticisms could
do,) so that presently they are able to Judge of the
Lyon by his Foot, or to take the matter at half a
Word. And if after all there be some Things Adven-
turous in the Words or Modes of Speech, or in the
other Circumstances, that ought to be considered,
they are better able to give their Opinions about
them than any body else; and they will be sure to
take care that their Conjectures and Opinions do not
contradict the more Essential and Principal Vertues
and Truths relating to Spiritual and Divine matters
(because they are acquainted with them) and conse-
quently that the Accessories do not destroy the Es-
sentials, or be prefer'd to them. Therefore such
CRITICISM in Sacred matters is by me called *clear-
sighted* or *Real*, which I would by no means despise,
because

because altho' those that are skilled therein, look upon it as an accessory and less necessary Thing, yet they do what they can to make it subservient to the Glory of God, and to promote, recommend, and illustrate Spiritual and Divine Knowledge.

In like manner in natural Things, if a Man's Real, External Faculties, namely, the Faculties of Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Touching and the like, suited and adapted to Corporeal Objects and their Impressions, have received into them the Operations of their respective Objects, and of their Properties and Qualities, so that they are truly and in a lively manner affected with them; the Eyes, *to wit*, with Light and with the Irradiations and Images of Cælestial and Terrestrial Objects, beautified with the diversity of various Colours; the Ears, with the differences of sounds; the Tongue with variety of Tasts, and so of the rest; 'tis evident that when such a Person hears Discourses, or reads Books that treat of Things which he has formerly seen or tasted, presently, if he understands but the Language, he will without any trouble apprehend the meaning of the Discourse and the substance of the matter, even altho' the Speaker or Writer should not express himself so accurately: Yea, if those that communicate their Thoughts to one another by the Intervention of Words, have seen the Objects that they treat of, or have them before them, they will in a few Words express and discover such Things as those that have never seen nor been acquainted with the Things themselves, cannot with all the fluency of Words that they are Masters of, explain so as to be fully understood. Moreover, if in these Corporeal Things, or in the Words wherein they are expressed, some Things, not so essential nor so well understood, be yet to be discovered; or if there remain some Things to be deduced from others by the help of their own Industry and Reason, 'tis certain, that this is best to be done by such clear-sighted Persons as are well acquainted with what is substantial; nor is there any Danger that they will advance any Thing, or make any Deductions, contrary to the solid and fundamental Properties of the Things themselves, which they have at other times perceived in a lively manner, or which would subvert those Properties. They will not ascribe to Light what belongs to Sounds, nor will they confound these with Colours, or Tasts, and the like; which are manifestly repug-

The same is Illustrated by a Similitude taken from Corporeal Objects.

Blind Criticism Illustrated by the same Similitude drawn from Corporeal Things.

nant to what they before knew and experienced of these Things.

But if a Man had not yet used any one of his Faculties, or if it had never been moved or affected by its respective real Objects; for instance, had any one been born with his Eyes shut, or with a film over them, and did he understand several Languages, and was he also a Grammarian, Logician, Philosopher and Historian, and was accustomed to hear many Discourses, and Books read to him; would he therefore, I pray, with all that Apparatus, and with all the Sagacity and Activity of his Reason, and by framing, considering, compounding and dividing such Ideas as they would suggest to him, and by all the Inferences he could draw from them, would he I say from all this be able to find out the true meaning and Interpretation, and to understand aright all that he heard others speak of Light and Colours, and of the coloured and lucid appearance of Cælestial and Terrestrial Things, and even of his own Body? Indeed he might very well pronounce the Words, Light, Colours, Sight, Beauty, Deformity; he might be able to translate these Words or Sounds, out of his own Language into Latin, Greek, Hebrew or Arabic; he might learn to add Phrases to Phrases, and say, that such and such are in this or that Author, and in this or that Place, that they are joined with such Things, and separated from others; he might also be able to turn or translate Discourses or Books as he hears them read out of one Language into another, and to mark the Faults of another Man's Discourse or Version: He might also say, because he had often heard it, that Objects are seen with the Eyes, and not with the Heels; that nothing is more pleasant than the Light; that Light makes the Day and Darkness the Night: That Opaque Bodies are discover'd and render'd more conspicuous by the Light; that the Eyes and the Sight are the most beautiful of the Senses, with a Thousand other Things that he might chatter and guess at: Yea, possibly among the Ignorant or those that are Blind like himself, who would admire his Skill and Discourse, he might possibly presume to attempt to explain such Things, and to draw Conclusions and Axioms from them, and instead of the Truth pawn upon them his own most absurd Fancies; as for instance, that the red Colour resembles the sound of a Trumpet; that the Light of the Sun, that ripens Grapes

and

and all sorts of Fruits, is a General or Universal Sauce or Pickle poured out of the Mouth of the Sun upon the Earth, and insinuating itself into all the Pores of Bodies that are fit to receive it, &c. And if it should so happen that together with applause any advantage should arise to such a Person from these and an infinite many more such Impertinencies, without doubt it would at last come to this, that he would take upon him to subject all Discourses and Books that he heard to his own Critical Rules and Judgment, to Judge of their Versions, and to laugh at those that should say that without the Knowledge of many Languages, without his Logical and Critical Rules, they can with a glance only of one Eye, illuminated by the Light and the Sun, and turned and exposed only to the Objects themselves, understand those Things better than he can do with all his Scholastic and Critical helps: Whom therefore he would look upon as very unfit Interpreters, confidently traducing those as Madmen and Fanaticks, that should affirm that almost every Thing in the Universe may be better known by the Eyes and the Light, than by the touch and feeling; in which alone, and possibly in the hearing, he would affirm that all true Knowledge of Things consists; and that from such a Knowledge, joined with Logic and Criticism, we ought to look for and receive the true Interpretation of all Things. All which indeed no Body that has the use of his Eyes, but must see that they are nothing but mere Fancies and Trifles puffed, buoyed up upon the Wings of Error and Arrogance, and having no Foundation but in the vain Opinion of a Blind Man of his own gross feeling, and of his insipid and mistaken Grammatical, Logical and Critical Learning.

Now this is exactly the Case with Relation to Spiritual and Divine Objects. If one has neglected the Life and Faculties of the inward Man, and has not turned himself towards Spiritual and Divine Objects, to receive their Operations and Impressions; if the Intellectual Eyes of his Mind are not open, nor have seen Light in the *Light of God*; if his Ears are shut, so that he has not heard the *Voice of the Father*, nor been taught of him, if he has not drawn near with his *Heart* to the Wisdom of God, nor has applied his *Mouth* to it, and so received the sincere *Milk of Understanding* to grow and live upon it; if he has not *Tasted* how Good the Lord is, and does not come to him in Spirit as

This Similitude applied to the Illustration of Blind Criticism in Things Spiritual and Divine.

unto a Foundation and Rock or *Living-Stone* upon which he may build all his Knowledge; if he does not *smell*, if he does not feel the *sweet savour of Christ*, and of his Divine Operations, Emanations and Spiritual Vertues; and if nevertheless and without any regard to these Things, he Hear with his outward Ears and Read Discourses and Books upon Divine Subjects, such as the Books of Scripture; yet tho' he may besides his own Language understand *Latin, Greek and Hebrew*, and all the Oriental Languages; tho' he may be a Logician, Philosopher and Historian, and be able to translate out of one Language into another, to judge of Versions, to pronounce those Words or Sounds that are used in the Sacred Writings, and Criticize upon Words and Things, and Circumstances with great Industry and Dexterity; tho' I say, he may be so qualified and be able to do all these Things, yet as to the substance of Things and all the Principal Heads, such a one in reality understands nothing at all; and is wholly Blind, and all his CRITICISM is BLIND, which tho' it may be able to produce some adventitious quirks about some Words, or the Stile, or about some External and Historical Circumstances compared with one another, or with other Writers, it is nevertheless *Blind*, yea, altogether Blind as to the Substance, Foundation and Scope of the Things themselves, and when it treats of the Application of such Things to the Eternal and Divine Faculties of the Immortal and inward Man. Yea, when Men of Experience speak accurately of these Things, and give a solid Explanation and true Interpretation, such a Blind Critic will boldly deny and deride them, and confidently pronounce the Internal and lively Experiences of the Divine Operations to be nothing but Dreams and Enthusiasm; he will call those that have experienced such Things unfit and the worst of Interpreters, if possibly he find that they are Ignorant of some Languages, or of his Philosophy, and of all the Pedantic Embellishments which he with much Industry acquired to himself in his Blindness; to all which, and especially to blind Criticism, he will appeal, as to the only proper Interpreter of Discourses of Spiritual and Eternal Things, yea, he would very Impertinently, not to say impiously Interpret the Promises of the Holy Spirits being poured out upon Men in the last Times, to import no more but that they shall then be great Proficients

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in this Blind art of his : Which surely is an Impudent lye of Satan, and the last Device that he could make use of to extinguish all the Power, if so be there be yet any left, of the Life and Spirit of Christianity, and to draw all Men headlong into the Nets and Snares of *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism*, And indeed such *Blind Criticism* does nothing else with all the Divine Volumes it turns over, but to deny all Divine Things, Properties, Vertues and Operations mentioned in them which its blinder Mother, Corrupt Reason, does not comprehend ; and then to strain the Words (whereby those Things are expressed) of the Scriptures and their Significations, and so to perplex every Thing by all the Artifices it can invent, that so those Sacred Words may seem to signify nothing of those Things that God intended, but rather the contrary : Then again, where it substitutes Things accommodated to its own natural and most Corrupted Taste, in the room of those Things signified by the Words of Scripture, and also from some less Principal and Accessory Circumstances of the Sacred Histories draws Conclusions, Observations and Institutions ; it can do nothing else but either broach Heresies, or confound one Thing with another, and Things Sound with those that are Corrupt, or instead of Real and Essential Vertues to present us only with their Superficial and Hypocritical outsidess and appearances, with unnecessary Speculations and barren Ideas about them, and with a Thousand other vain and ridiculous Notions and Conceits, all which have no manner of Affinity with the lively Properties of Divine Things, but are rather contrary to them, nor are they consistent with salutary Truth and a good Disposition, as being unfit to kindle, nourish and increase in us the Fire of the Love of God and of Things Eternal ; but rather calculated totally to suppress and extinguish the same. And yet these Foolish and Pernicious Trifles shall be published by blind Critics for *Sacred Dogma's*, Observations and Annotations, and shall be received as such by many others, blind like themselves, at the same time that they shall forsake and deride the true way of knowing Divine Things, Divine Illumination and Divine Faith, or the Oblation and Surrender of our Faculties, our Understanding, Will, Heart, and all our inward Powers, to God, and the true and inward Light, that he may shine upon them, and bestow and communicate to them the Light of

Truth and Wisdom, whereof he is the only Fountain.

Thus has *Parabasis* here in an ample, and as I may say sensible manner, *Poirer's* Sentiments upon CRITICISM, whether *blind* or *clear-sighted*, and how far he despises the one and esteems the other; whence it will appear whether by despising Mr. *Le Clerc's* Criticism, or even by having an infinite abhorrence of the same, it may be said simply and without any restriction that I *despise Criticism*, and that I *will not bestow any Pains upon it*.

Applied to Mr.
Le Clerc's
Criticism.

A Definition
or Description
thereof.

For seeing that upon Reading many of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Works, Critical, Philosophical, Theological, and Philological, I clearly saw and observed every where such Things as I have just now mentioned of blind Criticism, to be contained and scattered in them, I think my self obliged to declare, that I look upon his as a most flagrant Instance of BLIND CRITICISM, and even almost for an Original of it. And if I might be allowed to define it, I should say that 'tis a *Blind and Impious boldness of subjecting all Things, even the most Sacred and Divine, to blind groping in the Dark, of cavilling in a most unworthy manner upon them, and of exposing to Sale the dead and mangled Letter in the room of the living Substance it self, so that instead of the solid and Christian Religion of the Word Incarnate by whose Spirit we may return to the Father, it supplies us only with a certain Superficial, Historical and Critico-Philosophical Religion of Self-Love, which leads its Followers to Eternal Perdition.*

It would be very troublesome as well as superfluous after those Instances which I have produced in the foregoing Letter, and in these Considerations and Remarks upon his Censure, to collect all the innumerable Passages in his Works, which confirm this Definition. Even his late Exposition of the New Testament alone in *French*, with Critical Notes is such, that no honest Man can without Tears see how he mangles and wholly enervates those places of the Divine Oracles, which discover and assert the great Corruption of our Nature, as well original as inherent, and all the Streams that flow from thence; the Corruption of Human Reason; the weakness and depravity of Human Strength; the necessity of the Illumination of the Spirit of God (all whose Operations our Author restrains to the miraculous Gifts bestowed on the Apostles of the Primitive Church) to the Knowledge of

Things

Things Divine; the necessity of having the same Spirit in us, and of his presence to purify and sanctify us from Sin; and in general all the Operations, Revelations, Motions and Government thereof in us; as also the Mysteries of the Blessed Trinity and the Divinity of our Saviour, and Righteousness and Justification far exceeding all External and Pharisaical Probity, &c. In Expounding of all which he has made to good an use of that blessed Art of his, that he could scarce do the *Pelagians* and *Socinians* a greater Service, than by exhibiting the Samples that he has there and elsewhere given us of his Ingenuity that way.

And to make it appear besides these Reasons, that I am not prejudiced against that sort of Criticism, I shall take the liberty to add the Opinion of a very Learned Person, one well known for his Candor and Temper among the *Dutch Divines*, the famous *Witsius*, whose Moderation and Equity even *Parrhasius* himself is forced to commend, with Relation to the same matter. He among many other Things (which take up about Fifty Pages of his Sacred Miscellanies) which he has said against the rash Attempts of Mr. Le Clerc's Criticism, could not forbear ever and anon to break out into such Words as these.

(a) Woe to that bold and rash Criticism, which presumes to prefer its own Conjectures, as it owns itself, to the Authority of the Apostles, and consequently of Christ himself. — For what a Madness is this! And observing that our Critick refers the LXIX and CIX Psalms not to the Spirit of God, but to the corrupt Affections of Nature, he (b) says: I cannot, nor indeed ought I to dissemble it, but that to me these Things seem very Injurious to David, the Psalms of David, the Spirit of God by whom David writ his Psalms, and finally to Christ himself and his Apostles, who had a very different Opinion of these Psalms of David. And after he has more fully proved these Things, and added some Apostolical Testimonies, he goes on thus, (c) He most impiously doubts whether David was the Author of those Psalms. — What Name shall I give to this Doubt? Shall I call it supine Ignorance? Or an inexcusable and rash itch of Disputing? or the Prophan and Impious Inclination of a bold Mind to make a noise against the Apostles? Let not that Divine think that this Charge of Impiety against him proceeds from ill-grounded Anger. None that

(a) Misc. Sacr. Tom. I. p. 115, 117.

(b) Ibid. p. 215.

(c) Ibid. p. 218.

speaks

speaks for God and his Word should be frightened from acting seriously, and from calling every thing by its proper Name. — The Apostles witness that they are David's Psalms : They quote them as a Part of the Scripture. Peter also in a premeditated Discourse declares, That the Holy Ghost spoke so by the Mouth of David. And here we see a CRITICAL Divine arisen that openly maintains that those Psalms are not from the Spirit of Meekness, but rather the dismal Songs of a Mind agitated with vehement Anger, and burning with an insatiable desire of Revenge, otherwise than the Gospel of Christ Commands, Let Modesty itself speak, and even the most indulgent Tolleration, which the Remonstrants challenge as peculiar to their Sect, by what Name, if we have not yet lost the true Names of Things, we must call such perverseness : That when Peter says, The Holy Ghost spoke by the Mouth of David, any CRITICK should mutter, I doubt whether he spoke to David ; I know not to whom ; not the Holy Ghost, but the Spirit of Anger and Revenge, which is contrary to the Law and the Gospel, Dictated those Words, I cannot but be astonished at so great IMPIETY. A little after, this Excellent Person having shewn the Excellency of the Canticles, which our Critick Rejects and Compares to Ovid's Song of Poliphemus the Gyant, and having premised this Postulate, (a) What is it to turn the most Sacred Things into ridicule and to set them on a level with the most profane and absurd Stories of the Heathens, if this be not ? He subjoins : (b) Let it be observed, I pray, how great a part of the Divine Volumes he cuts off by this CRITICAL Scith. If we believe him, all the SACRED HISTORIES were written without any Inspiration. Some PSALMS, that are called David's, proceed rather from Anger and a Desire of Revenge, than from the Spirit of God. In the PROVERBS of Solomon there are many vulgar Things, than which a CRITICK without any Inspiration, might easily have spoken better. The SONG of SONGS has nothing Mystical in it ; but is like unto the Rustick and Gyganrick Song of Poliphemus. Now should we go on thus, how very little at last would there be left Divine ? O Miserable Church, that has hitherto kept and embraced and prized Writings of so little value as such a precious Treasure ! or rather, O BOLD and IMPIOUS CRITICISM that assumes such a Right to thy self over Divine Matters, and endeavours so WICKEDLY to destroy the Foundations of our Faith!

(a) Ibid. p.
228.

(b) Ibid. p.
230.

Faith! The same Celebrated Divine, after having spent almost all the XXII. Chapter in Refuting the (a) Cavils of our CRITICK about the matter of the Inspiration of the Apostles, whereby the perverse subtilty of Human Wit impiously matters against God; and having likewise observed (b) That he takes that way of Commenting which the Socinians above others follow, He concludes, (c) I protest that I have a due esteem for his Learning and Sense; but many of his Opinions, dispersed through all the Books that he has published, and which plainly savour of Arianism, Pelagianism and Libertinism, I utterly abhor and detest, as they deserve: Finally, I neither Covet his Praises, nor am I in any Concern for his Anger. I only ask one favour of the Reader, not to Judge of my Books by the short Sketches and Censures of the BIBLIOTHEQUE (See here what Credit ought to be given to them) unless the matter be of no great Moment in itself.

The same Person in the Second Tome of his Miscellanies, having a Dissertation about Lot's Wife being turned into a Pillar of Salt, speaks as follows of Mr. Le Clerc, who endeavours to weaken the belief of that Fact, by wresting the Sacred Text to make it Truckle to Criticism and his own Reason: (d) Mr. Le Clerc has stopt a great way on this side of the Limits of Obsequious Faith, Indulging too much the Rariocinations of his own Wanton Fancy. And then citing these words of Mr. Le Clerc: Therefore a WRESTED Interpretation would be more tollerable, than the SUPPOSAL of a Miraculous Event for the sake of Expounding two little Words: He adds, What Perverseness does there at last appear here? The Ancient Prophets were wholly imployed in Extolling the wonderful Works of God, which was the Result of their Piety; and yet we think 'tis an Evidence of our Wisdom to disparage Miracles, and to use all imaginable Artifices to Expunge them out of the Christian Belief? Even by this Example we may learn what it is to make that proud REASON the Interpreter of Scripture, which had rather WREST it, provided it be done with some quickness of Wit, than be thought to speak what Reason cannot deduce from its own Principles. This indeed is the same thing, as first for the sake of Reason to proclaim War against the Scripture, and then against Reason itself in expounding the Scripture. — Who can without Indignation Read such great BOLDNESS of Interpreters, in perverting the plain Words of Authors? — Finally, What is it that Reason

(a) Ibid. p. 330.

(b) p. 333.

(c) p. 345.

(d) Tom. II. Exerc. VII. §. 17, 19, 20, 21, 23.

son is so much afraid of? That God works Wonders? What part of the World do we now live in? Do we bear such things in the midst of Christendom, which even the Gentile World would be ashamed of? Is it repugnant to Reason for the Omnipotent and Infinite God to do those Things? — Nothing should appear so incredible to us in this Sacred History, as to oblige us to do Violence to the plain Words by a Paradoxical Exposition; and yet this is what Mr. Le Clerc does, omitting no word, which he does not unjustly mangle or carp at. — Surely, 'tis a great wickedness to pretend I know not what probability, against the clear and plain Narration of the Sacred History.

The same worthy Person published also in the same Tome, a Year after the *Parrhasiana* were published, an Oration which he had pronounced in publick the Year before the *Parrhasiana* came out, wherein he again briefly repeats the above-mention'd sad and just Complaints. Take here one or two Sentences thereof. (a) "The Sect of CRITICKS is a BOLD sort of Men, most presumptuously imagining that they may Treat all Men and Things as they please. There is nothing either profane or sacred that escapes the Violence of their hands: There is nothing so small or low that they think below their Care, spending whole Days in useless Niceties about Words and the Accents of Letters. On the other side there is nothing so great and high which they would not subject to their Pedagogical Determination. After they have satiated their Ambitious Desires in mangling (or as they call it correcting) the Writings of Prophane Authors, with the same confidence they take upon them to Judge of the Abstrusest Books of Holy Scripture; and by adding, taking away and transposing, they guess and guess again according to their Pleasures; depending solely upon the boldness of Conjecture; but yet with such a confidence in their Art, that they make as bold with *Moses* and *David*, and *Peter* and *Paul*, as they do with *Polybius* and *Livy*, and *Aristophanes* and *Plautus*." What an unworthy and insufferable Reproach is this upon Heavenly Men! who being moved by the Holy Spirit plainly discover that they were Inspired, and speak above the Rate of Man, and by their own Majesty easily vindicate themselves from all the Pedantick Marks and Characteristicks of Bold Censurers. — But I wish it had kept within

(a) Miscel.
Tom. II. p.
946, &c.

within these bounds. The Contagion has spread itself further than to be content with Metamorphosing some Words or Sentences. It attacks whole Odes (Psalms) and whole (a) Books; and having cruelly stabbed them with a (a) Job, Pro-CRITICAL Weapon, it in a Magisterial Manner verbs, Ecclesiast. Cantic. dashes them out of the List of the Divine Volumes; and that nothing might be wanted to compleat the IMPIETY, it compares the Mystical Songs, whereby the pure and inconceivable Love between Christ and his Church are most elegantly expressed, with the Impure and Heathenish Songs of Polyphemus to the Nymph Galatea. I perceive, my Friends, that ye are astonished. Ye can scarce believe me; ye can scarce believe your own Ears. It cannot but appear infinitely surprizing, and even almost incredible to you, that there should ever any where be such Monsters in Nature, as to pretend to Wisdom and to profess the Christian Religion, and at the same time to belch out such injurious Reflexions against the Holy Oracles of God! but yet indeed, my Friends, and you may believe me, such there are, what I have told you is true, and is only but a Sample of a great deal more of the same kind. Nor are such things whispered only, as possibly you might suspect, and talked of privately and in corners among those that are initiated into the Party, and Confederates in the same wicked Principles; but they are boasted of in publick, they are printed and exposed to publick Sale, they are in every ones Hands, and what Crowns the IMPIETY, they are looked upon as an Argument of Uncommon Wisdom and Learning. O Seculum! O Mores! Parrhasius might have seen these Things even before he writ his Parrhasiana, for they were published a Part the Year before; and yet notwithstanding he continues blindly to extol his own Criticism, to despise those that do not apply themselves to the Study thereof, and to praise those that favour his Sentiments.

And this is the Reason that whenever Parrhasius, or Mr. Le Clerc highly commends any Books or commendations Critical Authors, as great and incomparable Ex- of a Critick, pounders of the Scriptures, to whom he is indebted give cause to for many Things, and whose Notions are generally suspect him, agreeable to his Taste, I cannot but entertain some Suspicion of them as well as of himself. Indeed if what those Criticks have published upon the Holy Scriptures, be communicated with that Modesty that becomes them as certain accessory Exercises, as certain external Grammatical and Rational Annotations upon the Words and External surfaces of Things, they

they ought to be born with, and even deserve to be esteemed in their Degree: For he that Sells and Recommends any thing only according to its Intrinsic Value and Nature, ought not to be despised nor blamed; for in this case he deceives no Body, and such Wares of his may be of use in their kind. But should any one pretend to sell Chaff for Cedars, and Luppins not only for Brass but for Gold or Pearls; or if those Critical Authors have put up and sold their own Conjectures and Criticisms for the Substance and Light itself of the Divine and Salutary Sense of the Scriptures, and of the Essential Things intended by the Scriptures, and recommended to us in order to our Salvation; then indeed whosoever will candidly examine such Critical Volumes, and weigh them in the true Ballance of solid and substantial Things themselves, will clearly see that in that respect they are nothing but Chaff and meer Trash, and altogether unworthy of being read or considered by any one that knows that he ought to employ the short space of his Life in seeking Things Eternal, and in loving God with all his Heart, with all his Soul, with all his Mind and with all his Faculties, as also in removing the Obstacles that may hinder the same. And whatsoever does not tend to this, and yet goes under the Name of Good Profound and Incomparable Expositions of Scripture (whereof this is the Epitome and the only Scope) are rather meer Trifles and Impertinencies of no value at all.

And to illustrate the matter the better by Examples, examine, if you please, some of those Authors and Books upon the Scriptures, which Mr. *Le Clerc* so highly commends as the Principal, as the best, and as incomparable, and compare their boasted and imaginary incomparability (if I may so speak) with the real Incomparability of those Things, v. g. that we have yet remaining in the Homilies, Treatises, Books or Tomes of that incomparable Person (whom *Erasmus* so highly praises, and whom yet Mr. *Le Clerc* in more than one place despises) *ORIGEN*, upon the Holy Scriptures; and then, if you are not strangely prejudiced, you will soon discover what is Counterfeit and what is Real, and also the Difference between those Interpreters who are guided by blind Criticism only, and those who being hated by them, are made conspicuous by the Experience and Possession

sion itself of Divine Things. Together with Origen, the same Erasmus also, who must be allowed to have been something of a Critick, reckons St. Austin (to whom likewise Mr. Le Clerc has a great Aversion) and yet of this Person Mr. Le Clerc speaks thus in his Art of Criticism: (a) *We so much esteem Erasmus, that we think few of the Ancients equal, much less exceed him*: To the Ancients he might also have added many of the Moderns, and even himself too, without any Injury to the Truth.

(a) Art. Crit. Vol. II. p. 483.

Finally, In order to obviate an Objection, (which Mr. Le Clerc often urges) which Parrhasius might start afresh, as if by despising and rejecting his Criticism, the chief means and Instrument of Interpreting the Scriptures would by that means be destroyed; especially if we also reject the Assistance of Reason; it will not be amiss, besides what we have said upon this Subject in other (b) Places, to shew here how the meaning intended by God in the Scriptures may be discovered and possessed by every one, as far as is necessary to his Salvation and to please God, without having recourse to the helps and assistances of Criticism and corrupt Reason.

(b) de Etud. lib. 1. § 28. lib. 2. § 53. to § 8. lib. 3. § 70, 73, 76. and Oecon. Divin. Vol. 3. c. 14.

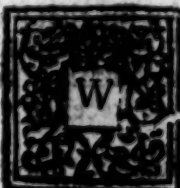
DISSERTATION

Upon the manner of

EXPOUNDING

THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I. E must in the first Place, know and Treasure it up in our Hearts; that the Case is quite otherwise as to the Holy Scriptures, and the Sense and Exposition thereof, than with the Books of other Authors, and with their Sense and Exposition.

II. The Authors of other Books (in so far as they are not enlightned by God and endued with his Spirit) differ as to their Exposition. The difference (Threefold. 1. That be- man and de- vine Books. 2. That be- vine Books. 3. That be- vine Books.)

Spirit) neither have nor pretend to impart to us other Senses, Meanings or Thoughts, but such as are agreeable to Nature and Corrupt Reason, and which do not exceed the comprehension and Powers thereof. Besides they are either dead themselves, or they are absent from us, so that we cannot consult them upon any Difficulty; their Volumes lie there as dead Things. But supposing that even the Authors themselves were or could be present with us, yet they are by Nature extremely weak; they would not be able to remove the Clouds, the Dullness, the Ineptitude, and the crasy Disposition of our Understanding, by imprinting clearly and distinctly the Objects themselves, or their Ideas upon it, and by moulding and putting the same into a fit capacity to receive such Impressions.

(a) Isa. 55.

8, 9.

But God the Author of the Holy Scriptures (a) Thinks and Speaks Things Supernatural; and his Design is to raise our Minds above the Power of corrupt Nature, and to make them Divine and like unto himself. Then he lives for ever, and is always present, he is present with all Men, we move, live and have our being in him, and none can flee and hide himself from his Spirit. Then again, he is infinitely Powerful over all his Creatures, and consequently over the Intellectual Faculties of Man: He is the most Omnipotent Light and Intelligence, and out of his own good Pleasure the most communicable of himself, and of his own Mind.

III. That

God can easily communicate the Sense of the Scriptures.

IV. Two Requisites on the Part of Man, to offer up the proper Faculties, and to have them fitly disposed.

V. Wherein as relates to a sincere Desire, and to the pure In-good Condition or preparation of the Faculties consists.

III. And hence it follows that God can easily communicate his Mind, Meaning or Intention to Men, and that either by the Intervention of Words or Letters, or even without them.

IV. But in order to the actual Performance of this, there are two Things at least required on Man's Part: First, That he offer up to God those Vessels or Faculties which God has given him for that purpose; namely his Understanding, his Heart and Affections, and in one word, the inward Man; and then that they be in a fit Condition to receive the Communication of God.

V. Now they will be in a fit Condition, if, so far as relates to a sincere Desire, and to the pure Intention of a good Heart, they have the same end, scope and mark with God and with his Light and Operations in Man. Now this end and scope common to both (God and Man) is nothing but the

LOVE

LOVE of GOD and of our NEIGHBOUR, which is the end and scope of all the Law of God, of all the Prophets, and of all the Scripture, or to use St. Paul's Words, *(b) The end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and a good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned*: That is, the end that God had, and which he proposed to Men when he gave them his Commandments and the Scriptures, is, that Man should propose it as his sole Aim to Love God and his Neighbour, out of a Heart purged of every other Affection and Design, and from an Intention of rendering to both their due, according to the Convictions of his own Mind; and also by committing himself and all his inward Faculties with full Confidence and Perswasion to God himself, and to his Promises and Revealed Truth.

(b) 1 Tim. I. 5.

VI. Whosoever therefore has and reads the Holy Scriptures with the same end, scope and design that they were written in, and by reading them seeks to acquire to himself, or to increase in himself, Charity out of a pure Heart, and a good Conscience and Faith unfeigned; and to that end and without Dissimulation offers himself, his Understanding and all his inward Faculties to the living God, who is intimately present within him, and in whom he lives and has his Being, who is Omnipotent Light itself, who is immense Goodness itself, and who is infinitely more desirous of Communicating himself and his Operations to Men than they themselves can be; 'Tis impossible but that God will afford such a Man Light and Grace sufficient to understand the Scriptures for his own Salvation; but 'tis God that opens and moves his Heart, and that enlightens and transforms his Understanding, whereupon he sees and feels the Mind and Sense of God in the Scriptures, after a saving, living, moving and infallible manner; and in that State he may also without any danger of Error ascribe that Sense to the Scripture, or to that Part thereof which he then reads, whereby he shall perceive that his Heart is more and more pushed forward and assisted to Disentangle itself from cleaving to perishable Creatures, whereby the Love of God and of his Neighbour may be advanced, and his Conscience quieted, and whereby he shall find that his Faith, or the faithful Surrender of himself and all his Faculties, to God, to his Word and Promises, and especially to the Mysteries which he does not yet understand,

VI. *The Application to the matter in hand. The Exposition of the Scriptures.*

Pfal. 16. 8.

Pfal. 73. 23.

VII. The Principal Objections of the Criticks.

VIII. How we are to answer such Persons from St. Paul.
1 Tim. 1. 4.
Etc.

derstand, grows daily more and more Perfect and Compleat: In which course as he grows daily more Faithful, so will he also more and more discover every where in the Scriptures, most admirable Means and Motives of growing and improving in Knowledge, in Love, and in the praise of God, and in every good Thing, and seeing God is always in his sight, and at his right hand, he shall not therefore be moved, or he shall not fall into any dangerous Error: But God will hold him by the Right hand. He will guide him with his Counsel, and after that receive him into Glory.

VII. You'll say, but there are so many Equivocal Things in Scripture: Many difficult and occult Circumstances of Things, Actions, Places and Times: Many obscure Mysteries and Prophecies: Now may not those you now describe, either be at a loss to find out any meaning to them, or may they not ascribe to them false and incongruous Meanings? and to avoid this inconvenience is it not very necessary to Study Languages, Philosophy, Criticism and History, and the like, without which you will not be able to understand any of these Things above-mentioned? Lo this is the vain Pretence, wherein they that Glory in Criticism, and that even in the blind and imaginary part thereof, ground the absolute Necessity of their Critical Idol, to which afterwards they Sacrifice all their Desires, and the far greater Part, if not all their whole Life, postponing and forgetting the end, the scope and design of God and of the Scriptures, which, being puffed up with the vain and empty froth of human Learning, they deride and laugh at in those who possess or endeavour to acquire the same, or that highly esteem it!

VIII. But even in the Days of St. Paul such Persons there were also, who having a Mind to be esteemed Teachers of the Law, raised Difficulties upon the Law and the Scriptures about Genealogies, and the like, which Minister Questions, rather than godly Edifying, which is in Faith. But what says the Apostle of these Things? does he advise them to apply themselves more closely to the Study of Criticism, and to all sorts of other Authors and curious Arts, that thereby they might be enabled to compose and boast of large Volumes about the Genealogies of the Scripture, and about the Divisions and Dispersions of the Tribes and Families of the Jews, to hold long Disputes on both

both sides, to support that that is more probable with Critical Arguments, to refute the other side that carries less probability with it, and to put off all these Things for sacred Dissertations, and for specimens of sacred Criticism? so far is he from advising any one to these Things, or to think of them, or the like, that on the contrary, he rather earnestly desires and admonishes two *Men of God*, Timothy and Titus, Pastors and Doctors of the Flock of Christ, *not to mind such things themselves*, and to charge others to shun them; *to avoid such foolish and ridiculous Fables, endless Genealogies, and foolish Questions, and Contentions and Strivings about the Law; because they are unprofitable and vain; and because they proceed from this, that such Persons having a Mind to be Teachers of the Law, and being desirous to be esteemed learned and well skilled in the Scriptures, erred and fell away from the only true and solid end of the Commandment, from studying and seeking Charity, out of a pure Heart, and a good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned: Whence they could not but fall away and turn to vain Jangling: In which they neither understand what they say, nor what they affirm; because their Criticism is blind, not seeing the things themselves, nor the scope and end, or the true Substante of all things contained under them; knowing that a Servant of the Lord must not contend about those things, or busy himself about them, but give himself up to the Practice of Piety, which has the Promise of this Life and of that which is to come; and propose sound Doctrine to others, that they may be instructed and wholly imployed therein, because that the infinite Goodness and Mercy of God our Saviour has appeared, that according to his Mercy he might save us; by washing and purifying us from all our vain and evil Affections by the Regeneration and Renovation of the Holy Spirit poured out abundantly upon us, and to be yet still more poured out by JESUS CHRIST our Saviour, that we may live in Holiness and Righteousness before God all the Days of our Life, and be led by the same Spirit into all Salutary Truth, and at last be made Heirs according to the Hope of Eternal Life. This is a faithful saying, and ought to be esteemed; that it behoves Men to be assured of these things; that they ought to be inculcated and maintained; that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good Works. These Exercises and Studies are truly Profitable unto Men; and not those*

M

foolish

2 Tim. 2. 23.
Tit. 3. 9.

Luke 1.

1 Tim. 6. 3,
 &c.

2 Thess. 2. 10.

IX. Other
 Answers to the
 Objections of
 the Critics.

foolish *Questions and Contentions* about the Law and Letter of the Scripture. That the Law and the Scripture, if rightly used, is good, and both to the good and the wicked; to the Just and Good they are indeed good in their end and in their Design, wherein they may also Exercise themselves, and improve and continue and glory; but not so in the Letter of the Law, which is not given to the Just (to him that has the Just and Holy Spirit of Christ, and the end of the Law) that he should weary himself in the Letter of the Law, and in light and trivial Questions about it: But as to the ungodly and *unrighteous*, who do not possess the spirit, the scope and the end of the Law, with respect to them the Law is good, if one make use of it in order to curb and restrain their sins, and every thing that opposes sound and sanctifying Doctrine. Besides these two uses of the Law and the Scripture; that is, besides seeking after and partaking of the End, the Scope, and the Spirit itself, and besides the Application of the Letter to curb the Sins of Wicked Men, *if any one teach any Thing else*, either as necessary or as a part of the Scripture, or as the Key thereof (as 'tis pretended Criticism is) *and does not acquiesce in the wholesome Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is Proud and puffed up with Wind, knowing nothing solidly, but doatings about Questions and Strifes of words* (about which Criticism is wholly taken up) *whereof cometh Envy. Strife. Blasphemies, Evil Sayings, Perverse disputings of Men of corrupt Minds* (whose Understanding, Reason, and every Thing, are Corrupt) *and who are destitute of the real and solid Truth*, and consequently are most prone both to fall themselves and to lead others into all sorts of Wicked Heresies; and that by the just Judgment of God, which in such a manner Revenges the Rejection and Contempt of the salutary Truth which is in and of his Spirit, and permits them to be carried away *with the strong Delusion of Error, that they should believe a Lye, because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be Saved.* And of this Divine and formidable Judgment we need not go far to seek Examples.

IX. Those Things are what may be returned in Answer to the above mentioned Objections from the Apostolical Doctrine; nor is there any Thing else contradicting this in other Places of the Scripture relating to them. But as a further Answer to such Objections we shall also add the following Observations,
 That

That the General Knowledge of Things and Actions, according as a Good and Honest Mind can gather it from the bare reading of the Scriptures, is sufficient to direct any one to the Spirit, to the scope and end of the Scripture, and to Eternal Salvation. That none can approach to God, or become acceptable to him, or attain Salvation by the most Accurate and most Critical Consideration and Discussion of Things, Actions, Places, Times and other Circumstances, as is evident in the Devil, who either knows such Things, or may know them, and from many Wicked Men among the Learned: On the contrary, such Things rather draw away Men's Minds from God and from Salvation, by Reason of the Pride which they fill their Hearts with, and of other Evil Fruits, and the loss of that precious Time which they ought to employ in working out their own Salvation. That these Things however ought not to be condemned, if any one that has made a Progress in the Study of Criticism and other Sciences already, apply them afterwards to the Letter of the Scripture, provided he rate them according to their real Worth, and no more; provided he do not recommend them as necessary, as solid, as the Key of the Scriptures, and as Things that justly challenge all our Time and Application; but only as certain lesser and accessory Exercises, upon which we ought to spend but little Time and Study; and that with this Intention only, that from such Types and Shadows, as I may say, the Mind may be raised and excited to the Contemplation of Things more Spiritual and Cælestial.

That as to *Mysteries*, we cannot by any Human Art or Study arrive at the Knowledge and Explication of them, but only by the Illumination and Communication of the Spirit of Divine Wisdom. That every one ought not to aspire to the Knowledge of such Things neither; but only those that are of a pure Mind, and that are moved by the Spirit to ask such Knowledge of God, that so their Prayers being acceptable to God, he may hear them; yea, that 'tis not necessary for every one even in the plainest manner to read or understand all the Scriptures; but such Things only of them as suffice to direct them to the scope of the Law and the Scriptures, and such as enable them to obtain the same, namely, the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, that it may live, and rule, and govern in them as it did in the Son of God whilst he lived.

upon Earth. Finally, if God should require of any one more and more particular Things about the Scriptures, we must wait for his Direction in the Matter, they must be given us by the Spirit, as well as the Scope, and the end, and the quickening Substance, and the salutary Sense and Interpretation of the Scriptures themselves, which God will have all Men to ask only of himself, and which he is always exceedingly delighted to give, and makes it the chief Business that he has with Men, to Communicate with Vessels duly prepared, or that offer themselves up to him in Sincerity: And to aspire after this, to give place to this Spirit within us, and to cherish the same, should be our principal and only Business and Care.

X. Other Objections, as that this is *Vulgar, Languid, and that God does not desire it.*

X. But possibly some may think, that this is the Business of low and vulgar Minds; that it is suitable enough to the rustick and unlearned part of Men, to confine themselves to that Sense only of the Scriptures, which God expects and requires; but that all this is beneath Men of Learning, and such as would be thought to know more than Ordinary: That that is a *Languid Exercise*; an *Insipid* sort of Food to a *Learned Mind*; that all Things are *Frigid* there (even as they call all *Allegorical* and *Spiritual Interpretations Frigid*;) And that possibly God neither *Delights* in such a Thing, nor desires nor will communicate such extraordinary Beams and Effects of his Light to Men, but very rarely, as is sufficiently evident from the few Instances that we have of that kind.

XI. Answer. *The Occupations of the Critics are rather vile and frigid.*

XI. O the deplorable blindness and stupidity of Mankind, and especially of such Learned Men! But if any Thing be truly low and contemptible; if any Thing deserves to be called *Languid, Frigid and Insipid*, what can be more so, than for an Immortal Mind, made for an Infinite Good and all the chaste Pleasures thereof to be employed and taken up about knots of Straws, and the empty shadows not of Things only, but even of Words for the most part; in canvassing whereof, Men so consume their Strength, and wrack their Brains, that if the Enemy and Deceiver of Souls had not first bewitched them with the Counterfeit appearances of Pleasure in them, a Man in his right Senses could not so much as have Thought of them? When on the other side, 'tis the most desirable employment and the Heavenly Pleasure of the most High God to search out for and to find Men of such Hearts and Understandings, as are willing to be struck and penetra-

penetrated with the Rays of his Divine Light, and with the true, lively and hidden Sense of the admirable Things shadowed out in Scripture.

XII. Therefore, as a great Sportsman that seeks about and looks out sharp for his Prey, watches until it peep out of its Den or lurking place, and then takes that opportunity to shoot at it, and take it and carry it off; even so that incomparable and incredible Lover of Men, that most ardent hunter of Souls, God, * looks down continually from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if any one seeks God, and his Eyes behold and observe the Nations: And if he sees any one come out of the lurking Places of his own Errors, Frauds and Wickednesses, out of his vain and Earthly Cares, Occupations, Studies and Distractions, and to turn his Soul without Dissimulation to its Creator, who made it to be his own peculiar and eternal Prey (as I may say) to be the Receptacle of his Light and Love, he thereupon strikes it with a dart or ray of his Light, and of the Supernatural Words and Inspirations of his Eternal Word, and penetrates it after so lively a manner, that immediately he begins to see and relish Things Eternal and Divine, and that also even altho' he had never seen nor read any Scripture before, as was the case of many before the Scripture was Written. But if such a Person has read the Scriptures before, and has been accustom'd to them, then in that case the lover and observer of Souls uses often to convey and cloath the Darts of his Light and Holy Inspirations under the cover, as I may say, of the Words of Scripture, which however he darts so powerfully into the Heart and the Mind of his Creature, that it feels its Heart to be very sensibly touched and wounded with the Love of its Creator, and its Mind to be admirably affected and illuminated with the Knowledge of Things Eternal and Invisible.

XIII. And then such a Person lays aside all the nauseous Trifles of the Earth, all the vain Toys and lilly Fancies of Men, and all his foolish and distracting Studies about Niceties, to mind him by whom he is touched, affected, and as I may say wounded, and to listen to his loving touch and luminous Irradiation: And then he begins to be able to distinguish aright between the Literal, Grammatical, Critical, Ideal and Philosophical Sense of the Scripture which he had before, and which (setting aside the Opera-

XII. This Explained by a Comparison, how God takes Pleasure in striking and penetrating Men's Minds with the Beams of his Truth, &c.

* Psalm 14.
2. and 66. 7.

XIII. The Comparison continued. How a Man laying aside Trifles, asks the living sense of God and of his Words,

John 6.

tion of God) appears now to him to be Frigid, Dead and merely Superficial; and between the Spiritual Sense thereof, which is the Mind itself, the Light and the Illustration of the Spirit of God, a Serene, savory, penetrating, lively and quickening Understanding, changing and converting the Soul, wholly towards God, and to eternal and solid Objects: He observes that when he read the Scriptures before as a Grammarian, Critick and Philosopher, the Sense that he gathered from it proceeded from the Activity and Industry of his own natural and corrupt Faculties, whence he drew nothing but Superficial, Frigid and Insipid Ideas, which again ministred occasion to Pride, and Flattery, and Contentions, and were the cause of Errors and Heresies, contrary to the end and design, and consequently against the true Sense of the Scriptures: That the last and divine Sense, which he finds concealed under the Words of the Scripture, and which is that whereof *Christ* speaks, *The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life*, is not in his Power, for as much as that tho' he read the Scriptures before with all possible Care, and had all the helps that his own Reason or Criticism could afford him, yet he could never have found out such a Sense of himself. Therefore desiring afterwards to acquire the lively, solid and divine Sense of the Scriptures, which he now sees comes from God alone; he now takes another way to acquire it, he alters his way of Studying; namely, he humbles himself before his Creator, he acknowledges his Impotence and Blindness, yea, and his unworthiness to receive the Divine Light, and to have his Understanding illuminated thereby by reason of his Innumerable Sins, and the abuse of all his Faculties throughout the former part of his Life: And he beseeches God that out of his Infinite Mercy he would open his Eyes that he may see the wonders of his Law, and that he would send forth his Light and Truth, or the Spirit of Truth which is in the Eternal Word that was made Flesh, that he may dwell in us, and speak in us, *Words that are Spirit and Life* and Reveal and make known to us the Father, and Himself, and the Mind and Sense of his Spirit, according to his Promises which we can never be deceived in. And then God, who does not despise a Contrite and Humble Heart, who is Faithful, Good and Powerful, knows how to keep his Promise to those that fear him, and is Rich to all that call upon him, and will stand

stands in no need of Criticism, Logick or Philosophy, to illuminate, quicken and renew his own Creature; but only of Humility of Heart, and of his Resignation and a Passive offering up his Understanding to him, whereupon he shines upon it, and discovers himself and all his Divine Truths therein, and consequently the true and living Meanings and Objects of the Scriptures, first indeed, so far as is necessary to the salutary Progress of the Soul in God, and then also (according as God thinks fit) more abundantly, so that the Soul is enabled to take delight in the Infinite variety of the wonders of God, and from them to take occasion to adore and celebrate God with Eternal Praises: For she sees that her Understandings and the Lights, and Objects, and Wonders of God, are infinitely enlarged, that the Word and Commandment of God is exceeding broad: That the Riches and Treasures that are discovered in Christ (the Object, the end and the scope of the Scripture) are such, that 'twas not without Reason that St. Paul, said *I count all Things but Lost, yea, and Dung, for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*; for as much as that in the Knowledge of him and of the Father by the Holy Spirit, is Life Eternal, and consequently luminous, Infinite and Eternal Pleasures.

XIV. See here how the Sense of God in the Scriptures may be very solidly and safely obtained by any one without that Counterfeit Key of the Criticks and Philosophers. But if moreover God think fit to make use of such a Person as a Labourer in his Vineyard, and to set him over others to instruct them in the solid and salutary Knowledge of the Divine ways, and of the Scriptures, he out of the Treasures of his Wisdom and Love bestows upon him besides some more special Gifts according to the Degree and Proportions of Lights which God has determined to communicate to Men of those Ages; and also such a measure of Divine Wisdom as may enable him to suit his Words and Discoveries to the several Capacities, Conditions and Circumstances of those that he has to do with. And indeed such a one may very justly be esteemed and commended as a true Interpreter of the Scriptures and of the Mind of God, who if possibly he had before any skill in Humane Learning, in the Languages or in Philosophical and Critical Knowledge, he may very well use them as adventitious ornaments and helps, the better, to accommodate himself to others, and to

Psalm 119.

96.

Phil. 3. 8.

John 17. 3.

XIV. And how he may be also enabled to explain the same to others.

win them over to the Truth; but which nevertheless he esteems as nothing in Comparison of internal, divine and solid Things, and of the Vertues and Operations of *Christ* and his Spirit, which include all the Substance, the end and scope, and the strength and sense of all the Scriptures, and which comprehend the whole of the matter, and which bring the Souls of Men safely home to the Haven of Happiness; in propagating whereof, he will therefore without so much minding other lesser Matters, wholly imploy and busy himself.

XV. *St. Austin was so qualified, otherwise than his Adversary, Mr. Le Clerc would suggest.*

XV. This Description, as to the main thereof, I have formed from what *St. Austin*, the most conspicuous of all the Fathers for his Humility, Charity and Sanctity, mentions of himself in his *Confessions*, wherein as that Man of God shews in a very lively manner how he was Converted to God much after the way and manner aforesaid by the Holy Scriptures, and how he had the lively and solid Sense thereof conveyed and communicated to him through Divine Light and Love; so also does he shew how afterwards, as to the scope, and salutary end of the Word of God, he became a solid Interpreter of the Substance of the Holy Scriptures, whatever *Mr. Le Clerc*, or his counterfeit Representative, can say to the contrary. We have shewn the true cause of their spite against this Good Man above: The pretence is, that he was not besotted to their Blind Criticism. But 'tis time, after this Dissertation, as useful and necessary as its long, to return to the Censure itself.

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The Remarks on Parrhasius's Censure continued.

(25.) *Of the Severity of Parrhasius's Censure; and his several ways of Answering.* (25.) **H**ERE *Parrhasius* acknowledges The Severity of his Censure, but he says, That I have justly brought it upon my self, and that I cannot deny as much. Empty Words, as are all the rest! I both can and do deny it, and have more than sufficiently shewn the Injustice thereof. *Parrhasius* will one Day taste of his own Severity, when he must give an account

count of all his unjust Reproaches before the Impartial Judge of all Men. I do not at all wonder to see such Fruits springing from the Principles of Self-Love: But that they should appear in a Man whom even the External shew of Honesty should have kept within bounds, least he should be Thought to imitate the Arrogance of those, who being bewitched with a Good Opinion of their own Learning, disdain and flout at all those that differ from them, that I have indeed something wondred at, and not I only, but even all the Honest and Modest part of the World also, when they have seen Doctors and Professors of all sorts, with relation to Things Sacred as well as Profane, whole Colledges, whole Nations, and even almost all the Divines of Christendom, when they contradict Mr. Le Clerc, to be in Parrhasius's Opinion no better than * Day-Labourers, Jackdaws, Chatter-Pyes, and Slaves, that they know not how to Reason, that all that they aim at is only to defame him, to draw him from his Studies, to get themselves a Name, to help off the Sale of their own Books by his Answering them, who nevertheless, to punish them, will not answer them, and the like, which the greatest Impudence and the most unpolished Ignorance might well be ashamed of: But his Self-Love has not kept so close to this Method of Answering by Contumelious Thrasonomisms or huffing Names, but that it has also sometimes betaken itself to the † Second and Third ways above-mentioned: Thus, to some English Bishops, whom he sooths, he uses Flattery; as also to the Celebrated Witsus whom he gently sooths by commending his || Moderation and Equity, in refusing of Mr. Le Clerc in the manner above-mentioned, to whose Censure he as tamely submits himself as little Lambs do to their Shearers: And with others again, he takes a third way, that is, he attacks them by his Impotent way of Vindicating himself and his Writings, as he has done with regard to the Celebrated Professor Wayenus, who altho' in his Excellent and Learned * * Wayen. Dissertation he has not handled Mr. Le Clerc and his Errors more severely than Witsus did, yet he has given so different an Answer to it, and so full of Anger and Impotent Malice, that if I had not above, in relating the fourth Quality of Self-Love, shewn the Natural Cause of his Artificial and Political Diversity, the Readers would scarce believe their own Eyes. Finally, altho' in this last way of Answering more boldly, our Author would seem to descend to consider

† At the beginning of the special Remarks. Parrhas. p. 400, 405, 438 — 441.

* * Wayen. Dissert. de λόγῳ. contr. Cleric. præfix. Rittangelij. Libræ Veritatis.

(a) Lettre de
M. N. a un
de ses amis
sur les Par-
rhafiana, pour
M. Vander
Wayen, p. 96.

(26.) Of Par-
rhafius's o-
ther boastings,
That he will
not Answer.

(27) That others
would make
themselves

sider matters more particularly, he only does this in Appearance, and in a Sophistical Manner, picking and carping at this or that Trifle or Inconsiderable Circumstance, without so much as naming or touching upon the Substance of the Matter, but leaves the Principal Points and betakes himself to a Thousand shifts, which he applies with all the Fraud and Ill Nature that he can, as is shewn in a certain Anonymous French Letter, published in vindication of Wayenus against Parrhasius, the substance thereof is briefly contained in the following Lines: (a) Parrhasius answers to nothing; he attacks nothing in particular: He knows not what to complain of; and when he himself most evidently belches out all that Gall which he reproaches others with, he only seeks to cast dust in the Eyes of his Readers, and to deafen and disturb them by certain general words, and by Calumnies which he cannot prove, just as if he could Transfuse his Gall into his Readers meely by exposing the same to their Eyes; and consequently persuade them upon his Credit to believe all the Ill of others, which he accuses them of in his Writings, — but does not prove. And yet Parrhasius pretends, but very Ridiculously, in the Preface to his Second Tome, that by such Specimens of Answers he has justly acquired a right of holding his Tongue for the future; as if indeed without any Specimen of Sophistry, one had not always a right to refrain from publishing Lies!

(26.) As to what follows to the end of the Censure, seeing they are of the same Nature with the foregoing, and contain rather personal Reflexions, in vindicating whereof the Reader would find but little Profit, I shall not insist upon them as I have done upon Things of more solid use. He thinks Men don't see through the mask, when he boasts that he will not Answer others, That he has no mind to enter the Lists with them, &c. But they Laugh at all this pretended Assurance, had the Question been about External, Historical or Critical Niceries, wherein Mr. Le Clerc is allowed to be pretty well versed, his boasted Confidence might be bore with; But seeing the Controversy is about Things Spiritual and Divine, with regard to which he is wholly Blind; there is no room here for his boasting, nor is he capable of forming a right Judgment of them.

(27.) And the Readers will also laugh to hear known by Quarrelling with him,

the

the necessary Defence of the Truth, against his Errors, called by him *the seeking* of Quarrels with him, in order to make my self more known to the World.

(28.) And also, *To make my Books sell, which no body reads.* Here Parrhasius manifestly confounds the World of Men in his own Brain, with the World of Men in *Rerum Natura*. In that no body either buys or reads my Books: In this, the several Editions and Translations of my Books into other Languages, and the Testimony of many Authors that daily commend them, evidently shews the contrary. But Parrhasius who could wish that no body would read such Books as detect his or Mr. Le Clerc's Errors, in order to bring them into Contempt as unworthy of being read, he draws an Argument from the imaginary Ideas of his own Brain to the Real Existence of Things themselves. A New and Ridiculous kind of Falacy! But seeing Parrhasius cannot but know that more than one of Mr. Le Clerc's own Books have been condemned to the worst uses of waste Paper, and that others have in several places been prohibited as hurtful and unworthy of being Read, I wonder he would not be more modest and circumspect as to this sort of Reproach.

(29.) This counterfeit Appearance of a Mind secure of its own Cause, can only impose upon Children; he consents that my Letter be compared with the Things that I therein oppose (or maintain against him) and that *without any other Answer* of Mr. Le Clerc. Let the Readers do so; and then I doubt not but they will be amazed to see the incredible Assurance of a Man, whose Errors and Disingenuity are detected as clear as Noon-day.

(30.) And yet in this shew of confidence there appears no small Evidence of his fear: For fearing, least the Readers, to his Condemnation and Dishonour, should take that liberty of Reading which he granted them, he at the same time tells them that *even the superfluity of time spent in reading my Letter is only losing so much time.* How candidly does Parrhasius prepare his Readers to look into the Arguments of both sides, as becomes equitable Judges, without Prejudice or Affection to one more than the other! But (if I may take the liberty to speak a little boldly of such a Despisers) even in that Letter to Mr. Le Clerc there is more profit for a Soul that seeks to make a real Progress in solid Erudition, than in

all

all Mr. Le Clerc's Books taken together, as being unworthy of a Christian, and of a contagious Nature, and consequently such as cannot be read without loss of time and detriment to the Readers; and that it may not be thought that I say this out of Prejudice, I shall here produce Mr. Le Clerc's own Testimony in confirmation thereof.

Though his own Writings, by his own Confession, cannot be read without loss of time.

He therefore speaks thus in the Preface prefixed to his French Translation of the New Testament, about the beginning. *If I must speak the Truth, I am so tired of all the Labours (that differ from the Sacred) to which the condition of human Affairs often call learned Men even against their Will, that my Pen has a thousand times dropt out of my hand when I have been employed about them, and I have said silently to my self: When will that happy Day come, when we shall do nothing any more unworthy of that excellent Nature that God has given us, and of those Promises that he has given us in the Gospel? When shall we leave off to study Languages and the Opinions of Men, and to read both the Chimerical Notions that they have left us, and the nauseous Histories of their Dissolute Morals and evil Actions? how long shall we see the Sun rise and set upon such labours of ours as we shall be ashamed of when that light shall appear that will never set again? When shall our Employments be of such a Nature, as that we shall have no cause to repent of them? You see here that Mr. Le Clerc in express words acknowledges that most of his own Labours, and consequently of his Books, are unworthy of a Man, whether we consider him in his own excellent Nature, or as he stands in relation to God and his Gospel. That his Studies are lamentable Occupations of the Soul about Languages and the Opinions of vain Men, about their Chimerical Thoughts and the offensive Stories of their Villanies: And finally, that all those his Labours are such as he must in the last Day be ashamed and repent of; and consequently, that all his Labours and Books cannot be read without LOSS of TIME, is what our Author himself expressly acknowledges; but I wish he was sincere in it! and that he would not immediately after commend, as he yet (a) continues to do daily, the impure and profane compositions of Catullus, Terence, Theocritus, and the like, which he highly extols, and even Promises to publish a new, in order to occasion the waste of more time and to do more mischief to Souls (to use his own words) which we must be ashamed and repent*

(a) Vid. Bibl. Choisie. Tom. III, IV, VI, VII, &c.

pent of when that Light shall appear that will never set, when far from Shame or Repentance, the Salutory Labours of the Misicks, which those Mockers called Panatical, and exclaimed against as Chimeras and Fooleries, and as Mispending the time, and all those that have seriously given themselves to the Study of them, shall appear with Joy before the Divine Tribunal, and shall be like a Tree planted by the Water-side, that will bring forth his Fruit (the Fruit of Eternal Salvation and Glory) in due Season; and his Leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he shall do (and does) it shall prosper. As for the ungodly, it is not so with them; but they shall be like the Chaff, which the Wind scattereth away from the Face of the Earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the Judgment; neither the sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous. But the Lord knoweth and loveth the way of the Righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall Perish. Psalm i.

(31.) There remain yet two Places in the Parrhasiana against me, which, seeing he only according to custom attacks me with Reproaches instead of Reasons, I shall transiently touch upon, so far as what I have to say may be of use to the Reader. The Learned Wayenus, in his Dissertation against Mr. Le Clerc, quotes me in several Places thereof with commendation. Parrhasius being galled at this, (a) supposes a Case wherein Wayenus and I may differ; and then he puts in his Mouth the Reproach of a most obscure Lurker against me, which Parrhasius himself durst not directly charge upon me. What may nor by this Artifice be said against Mr. Le Clerc, not excepting the Expressions of Peter against Simon, of Paul against Elymas, of John against Cerinthus, and of Polycarp against Marcion, if one would suppose him to have been alive and meet them at that time? and this I only mention to shame such a Slanderer, and not that I intend to use the like Artifice against him. But Parrhasius is mistaken in this Conjecture of his, when he thinks that Wayenus would use such bitter Reproaches, upon the bare Account of differing from him in some Things. That Learned Person knew very well, even before he praised me, wherein I differed from him, and yet he praised me nevertheless; because he knew that we are obliged to bear with such Opinions as are only Accessories and not Fundamental, when otherwise those that hold them retain the solid

(31.) *Why*
Wayenus
writ against
Mr. Le Clerc,
and not against
me.

(a) Parrh. p.
434.

FOUNDATION of Christianity in true Faith, viz. JESUS CHRIST, *The Eternal Word of the Father which is made Flesh, God manifest in the Flesh, to cleanse us from sin and to restore us to the Government of the Holy Spirit, and consequently to the Father and to Life Eternal, when we shall partake of those Benefits, and of the Benefactor and worker of our Salvation by FAITH, whereby on our part we shall be enabled to resign our Hearts and Understandings, and all the Faculties of our Souls to God in Christ; and on the part of God to receive his Divine and Amorous Light, and by the help thereof to know and embrace things Divine and Eternal, and all the means to them, not Ideally, but Really and Solidly.* Now this Fundamental Principle he has acknowledged in me: And could he have perceived the same in Mr. Le Clerc, he would undoubtedly have praised him also, and what other Errors he might have observed in him, not destructive of this Fundamental Doctrine, he would have bore with charitably. But how could he acknowledge this Fundamental of the Christian Religion, this substantial Part thereof in a Man who (a) calls these Things and the like, empty Speculations, and Fanaticism in general?

(a) Parr. Ib.

(32.) Mr. Le Clerc's Reasons why so many oppose him, exposed and refuted.

(b) Parrh. p. 437, 438.

(32.) The other Place does not so directly regard me, as all those that any where oppose Mr. Le Clerc, Parrhasius fearing least from such a general opposition against Mr. Le Clerc it should be thought that he had given great cause for the same, and therefore that he is not without fault; in order to remove this Prejudice he brings (b) Three or Four Shadows of Reasons, which are all Fallacious, and in one of them he introduces me, which in Truth makes against himself. The last of them must certainly be laughed at; for he says, that the Reason why so many every where are against him, is because they cannot brook to see his Writings so universally esteemed by others. Again! the First and Third pretend, That certain Divines cannot without anger endure to see one that does not agree with them in all things; but that Mr. Le Clerc has written so many Things, that 'tis impossible but that he must differ from them in some things; but the Charge against him is not that he differs from others about some things promiscuously, but what all object against him is, That he differs from the rest of the Christian World as to Fundamentals by reason of his Pelagian Principles and Tennets:

Tennets: And is not this a good Reason why they should all oppose him in earnest? The Second Reason that Parrhasius gives why he ought not to be suspected, because of the many Adversaries in all Parts of the Christian World, is this: That the number of Censurers and Testimonies against him in any Society of Christians, ought to be considered but as one Censurer and Testimony in every Society. And the Reason he gives for this, is this; because they are all Jack-Daws or Chatter Pies, that have all one Note, that is, one and the same System, which they are not allowed to examine freely, and which they are obliged to follow under all those Penalties, that may be inflicted upon such Ecclesiasticks as change their Opinions. But from hence 'tis plain that he excepts me, as one who lives in no one Society; and consequently, who am neither a Chatter Pye, nor a Jack-Daw, nor obliged to stick close to any vulgar Note or System; but as one that is at liberty to examine all things without any fear, and to differ from others. Now from hence it most evidently follows, that my Testimony, in a thing wherein I oppose him in common with all the rest, cannot be eluded by him, as he does that of others, who he says talk after one another like Jack-Daws and Chatter Pies and Slaves; but that it ought to be considered as coming from a Mind void of all Prejudices and Party Considerations; and that therefore it ought to carry some weight with honest well-meaning Men. And thus Parrhasius himself destroys his own or Mr. Le Clerc's Argument. But seeing he is a Scoffer, he endeavours to save the matter by this ridiculous and petulant Assertion; namely, That I abuse the same Liberty to propagate and defend any kind of Dreams or Fancies. But what I pray is this ridiculous Sophism to the Purpose? We don't now speak of my private Opinions, nor of their Qualities, as I may so say; but the Question is about Mr. Le Clerc's Opinions, whether according to the general Testimony of all Men about them, we have not reason to suspect that they tend to promote the Interests of Socinianism? It is worth the while to detect the chief Fallacy that Parrhasius makes use of here, to remove the Suspicion of blame from Mr. Le Clerc, and to justify the Appellations that he bestows upon his Adversaries, as a parcel of Chatter Pies and Jack Daws, tied up to one Note only, and utterly deprived of the liberty of

Examina-

Examination : When yet these, as to this matter, are perfectly in the right, and Mr. *Le Clerc* himself is the only Person that deserves to be blamed. It must be observed then, that the Question between Mr. *Le Clerc* and his Adversaries is of a two-fold Nature; the first is a Question of *Right*, (as they call it) viz. Whether his Opinions as published in his Books, are consonant to Truth, and whether the Reasons that he gives be valid and rightly deduced from sound Principles; the other is a Question as to the *Fact*; viz. Whether his Opinions and Doctrine be the same with the Opinions and Doctrine of the *Socinians*, without having any regard to the Truth or Falsity of them as such. Some have taken the first way of Disputing with Mr. *Le Clerc*; and those that have taken this Method have not refuted him from the Principles peculiar to their own Sect or Society; but from such Principles as they hold in common with all Parties or Societies of Christians, the *Socinians* excepted: Whence it follows that it is both false and unjust to compare them to *Jack Daws*, who from a System peculiar to their own Party, join in one cry against Mr. *Le Clerc*; that his Opinions are false, impious and profane, &c. But as to the matter of Fact, whether Mr. *Le Clerc's* Doctrine be the same with that of the *Socinians*, there are many, among also are those of whom *Parrhasius* here complains, that make such a Question. Now for any one to be admitted as a proper Witness or Judge in this matter, 'tis enough, that he knows and understands what the *Socinians* Teach, what Mr. *Le Clerc* has written, and to state the Question right with relation to their Doctrine, and then to judge, whether the State of the Question be the same on both sides or not. Now 'tis evident that none ought to be denied the liberty of forming such a Judgment, because that he espouses another System which condemns that Doctrine as false; for the Question here is not about the Truth or Falsity thereof; but about the Identity or Diversion of the Doctrine, true or false, which every one has full liberty to affirm or deny, let him hold what System he will himself, without being restrained by the fear of any Punishment.

Let us give an instance of this kind. Let us suppose, *v.g.* That the *Arian* Doctrine is condemned (as indeed it is) as false by all the Systems of Christians, and also, if you please, that every one has free liberty to

to condemn it. This surely does not in the least hinder but that some of old did, and others now a days do take the liberty to judge whether the Doctrine, *v. g.* of *Eusebius of Cesarea* be the same with the *Arian* Doctrine or not. And we see that in Fact among Christians that unanimously reject *Arianism*, many have and still do openly take this liberty, some thinking that *Eusebius's* Doctrine is *Arian*, and others not. Now if in this matter all, or the greatest part agreed, he might justly be suspected of an Error, or thought Innocent, according to the Opinion of his Judges, provided they themselves knew perfectly what the Doctrine of *Arius* was; and also understood *Eusebius's* words, and the Equivocations, if any such should be found occurring in his Works.

The Question is whether his Doctrine, scattered every where throughout his Books, be the same with the Doctrine of the *Socinians* or not? *Parrhasius* very absurdly and unjustly refuses to admit those as Witnesses or Judges in this Case, who embrace any System contrary to that of the *Socinians*; for this does by no means destroy the Liberty of Judging, whether any Doctrine be of the *Socinian* kind or not: And every one may be a proper Judge here, provided he have these two Qualifications. 1. If he have a true Idea of the Doctrine of the *Socinians*. 2. If they Read and Understand what Mr. *Le Clerc* has published. They will be qualified as to the first point, if they know. 1. That the Capital Error, and the first and only Foundation of *Socinianism* is *Pelagianism*; That is, the Denial as well of our own Corruption, and Mortal Sicknels, as of the Medicine itself, *viz.* The Grace of God, operating Inwardly in us by the Effusion of his Light and Love, the worker and finisher of our Salvation. 2. That the chief Branch or Member of this Evil Root, is the asserting the Power of Reason (as 'tis Corrupt and Blind, and without being renewed by the Grace of God) and that even as to Divine Things, all which it would represent by its own superficial and imperfect Ideas, and subject them to its own Examination and Judgment (however dark and corrupt) together with all the Mysteries of the Christian Religion, and the Sense and Interpretation of the Scriptures themselves. 3. Hence flow like so many Corollaries or particular Consequences (and not as the Principal Point of the Matter) the Rejection of those Mysteries which Corrupt Reason does not comprehend,

* Remarks
upon § 12 of
the Censure.

viz. The Blessed Trinity, the Divinity of *Jesus Christ*, the Incarnation of the Word, the Divinity also of the Holy Spirit, and his dwelling and inward Operations in us. 4. That they use Equivocal Expressions, that is, that they impose another meaning upon Words, than what is common and natural; to wit, thus they allow, that *Jesus Christ is the true God*, that is, that he is truly made and constituted so: That in him is the *Eternal Divinity*, yea, that the *Eternal Divinity of Christ created the World*, &c. That is, that the Nature and Essence of *Jesus Christ* is indeed a mere Creature; but that to that Creature there is added as a certain External Adjunct, the *Eternal Divinity of the Father*, which Divinity of the Father may therefore be now called the *Eternal Divinity of Christ*, which therefore Created the World, and is that of which all the Divine Attributes ascribed to *Christ* in Scripture, must be predicated &c. and such like Artifices. They will have the other Qualification, if they read Mr. *Le Clerc's* own Books, as well those that *Parrhasius* mentions, as those that he omits, especially *Liberius*, of which mention has been made * above, the greatest part whereof is copied into his Notes upon his *French New Testament*, not to mention other Anonymous Books, whereof 'tis said he is the Author, and which the stile confirms to be his, wherein the Orthodox are attacked under the Notion of having espoused *Platonism*; and the *Socinians* are defended under the Names of *Scripturists* and *Unitarians*. But setting these aside, if from reading the former, and from innumerable places in them, the Readers of whatever Party shall not conclude that Mr. *Le Clerc's* Doctrine is not the same with that of the *Socinians*, it must be acknowledged and confessed that he has been unjustly suspected of *Socinianism*: But if they all unanimously come to the same Conclusion, let *Parrhasius* harp as long as he pleases upon his *Jackdaws* and *Charter-Pyes*, the Systems of particular Sects, and their having all but one Note; he can never impose upon Impartial Judges so far as to make them believe against all Right and the Laws of Reason, that the Learned Men of all Religions and Societies, would set aside their Private Differences and Animosities to agree together to condemn an Innocent Person, and whose Humane Learning they don't otherwise despise, against their Conscience, when to their Eternal Dishonour, such a Sentence might from his own Writings that are published

lished, be easily proved to be false and nothing but the effect of mere Prejudice or Malice. *Parrhasius* had done more wisely had he held his Tongue altogether as to this matter, least possibly some of those *Chatter-Pyes*, or some Body else, think it worth their while to examine and discuss the matter more particularly, and to display the Truth openly before all Men, being at last tired to see himself and all the rest of Mankind so long mocked and huffed by a Man, who thinks himself so Wise and all the rest so Foolish, that he thinks he can persuade them that they don't see that which even a Blind Man may feel: Unless possibly some Body attempt the same Thing with a better design, viz. To prevent the seduction of many Souls from the way of salutary Truth: Which yet I had much rather should be effected by the Man's own Repentance and Amendment. And that he may do so, may the Spirit of God open Mr. *Le Clerc's* Eyes (who has at last owned himself to be the same with *Parrhasius* in more places than one of some of the Tomes of his *Bibliothèque*) and move and penetrate his Heart with Divine Fear! And this I heartily wish, and shall always pray for.

FINIS.

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